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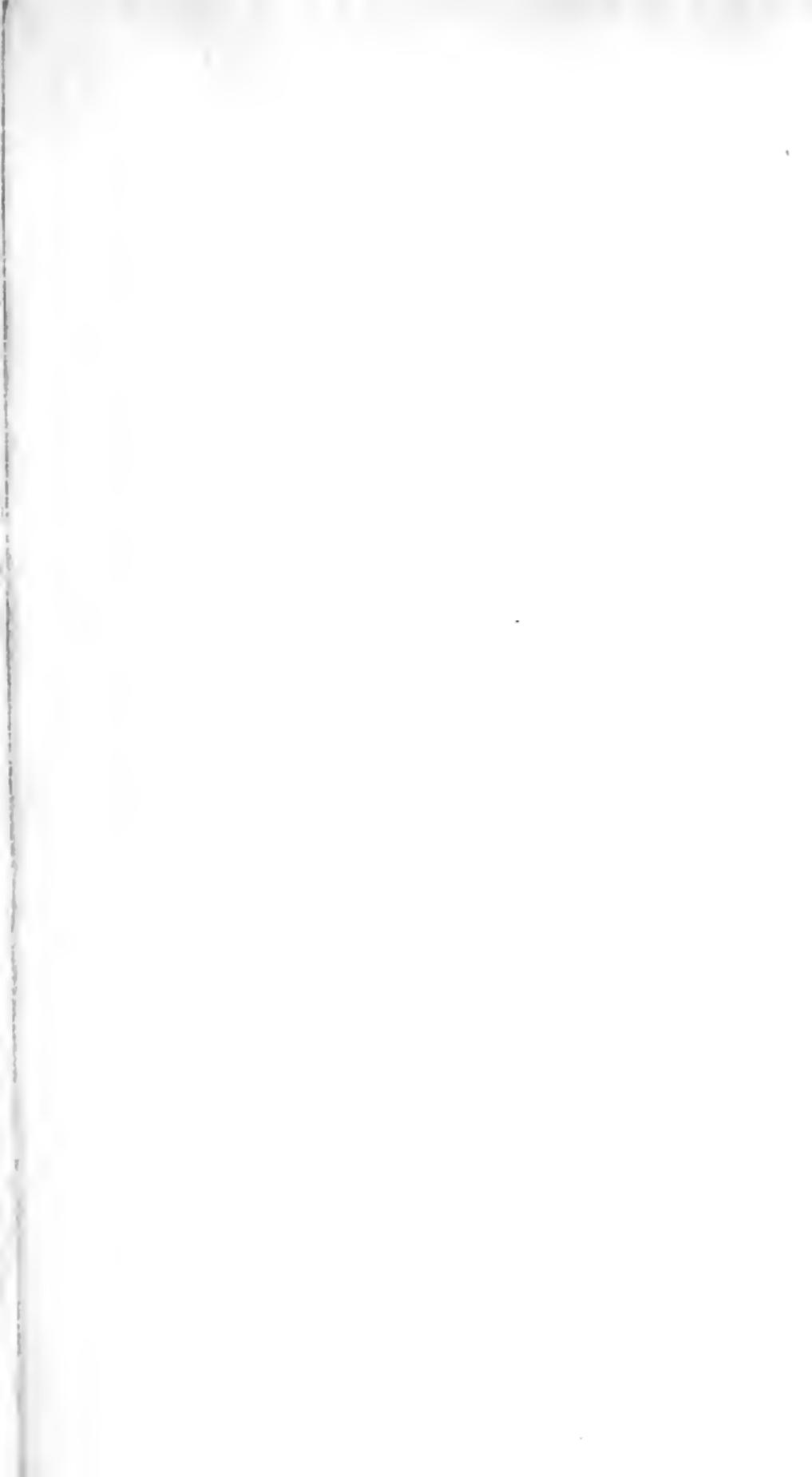
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Genlis, Stephenie de  
Corinne de  
ADELAIDE AND THEODORE;

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OR  
LETTERS ON EDUCATION:

CONTAINING

All the Principles relative to three different  
Plans of Education; to that of Princes, and  
to those of young Persons of both Sexes.

*Translated from the French of Madame la Comtesse  
de Genlis.*

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VOL. I.

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# A D E L A I D E

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# T H E O D O R E.

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## L E T T E R I.

*From the Baron d'Almane to the Viscount Limours.*

Feb. 2, Three o'Clock in the Morning.

BY the time you receive this letter, my dear Viscount, I shall be twenty leagues from Paris. I am setting off immediately with my wife and two children for four years. I have neither been able to give you an account of my intentions, nor to bid you adieu, and fearing the remonstrances and solicitations of your friendship, I have carefully concealed from you my intentions. The manner in which I now proceed, after long and deliberate reflection, is only the result of that lively tenderness, which you well know I feel for my chil-

dren. It is from them I expect the happiness of my future life, and I dedicate myself entirely to their education. I shall perhaps appear to the world to make a great and painful sacrifice: I shall also be accused of singularity and caprice, and indeed with reason. I cannot in this letter lay open to you all my ideas. They are too numerous and extensive. When I arrive at B—, I shall write you all the particulars, which you have a right to expect from my confidence and friendship. Be assured, my dear Viscount, that I shall not lose sight of the delightful project we have formed, and which ought to draw still closer the bonds which unite us. Removing my son in his infancy from the examples of vice, in becoming his governor and his friend, am I not working for you as well as for myself? Since it is virtue alone can render him worthy the happiness you design for him. Farewell, dear Viscount: let me hear from you; be not too hasty in judging me, and above all do not condemn me, before you know all the motives which may influence my conduct. My wife is writing to yours a long letter: but knowing so well the Viscountess, she fears her vivacity, and entreats you to moderate its effects as much as possible. We are only in fear of her first letter, as we are sure time and reflection will not fail to justify us.

## LETTER II.

*Baronne's d'Almane to the Viscountess  
d'Limours.*

Feb. 2.

WE arrived at B——, my dear friend, all in good health. My boy and girl, at six and seven years old, bore their journey perfectly well; and as they slept as easy in the carriage, as in their beds, are infinitely less fatigued than I was myself. This country is charming, though I am not yet acquainted with its environs; yet the delightful views which may be seen from the castle, are sufficient to give me an idea of them. Every thing here puts on a plain and humble appearance; I have left pomp and magnificence behind me at Paris, in that large and disagreeable house we lived, and which was always so displeasing to me. I at length find myself lodged according to my taste and my wishes. My little *Adelaide* too is charmed with this country, and our habitation. She says she likes instructive pictures much better than damask hangings, and that "the Sun of Langue-  
" doc is brighter than that of Paris." As I conclude my dear friend is at this time a little displeased with me, I shall reserve my more particular accounts and descriptions for the happy moment of reconciliation. When you have read my heart, I dare believe, far from condemning me, you will approve every step I have taken. Consider, though you may be permitted to quarrel with your friend, when in the space of five minutes you can ask her

pardon, you have no longer that privilege when she is at the distance of two hundred leagues. Besides, what crime have I been guilty of more than concealing a secret from you, which was not my own to divulge? Mons. *d'Almane* positively forbid my trusting you with it. But do you not remember the last time we supped together? In truth, you might have guessed from my melancholy, from my tenderness, what it was impossible to acquaint you with! Adieu, my dear friend! I shall expect your answer with the utmost impatience, for I cannot be happy, whilst I think you are displeased with me. I embrace Flora, and the sweet little Constantia with all my heart; and I entreat the former will sometimes talk to you about the best friend you have in the world.

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## LETTER III.

*The Countess d'Ostalis, to the Baroness d'Almane.*

THE day of your departure, my dear aunt, I went as you desired to Madame *d'Limours*. In the morning she was denied to me; but in the evening she gave me admittance. I found her a little angry, but more grieved. She wept on seeing me, and then gave a loose to complaints against you; and treated me with a coolness, the cause of which I easily penetrated, and which was nothing more than an impulse of jealousy, occasioned by the idea of my having been entrusted with the secret, you had so carefully concealed

cealed from her. I could have said to her, " How, my dear Madam, was it possible that my aunt, my benefactress, my mother, that she, to whom I owe my education, my establishment, almost my existence, could have any reserves with her child, or could fear from me, either the objections or the oppositions she dreaded from you ?" But I happily recalled to my mind one of your maxims, which forbids our making use of reason to oppose ill humour, and I remained silent. I dined yesterday at her house, and found her nearly in the same temper. She had many people with her ; and I perceived several of her visitors endeavoured to irritate her against you, my dear aunt, by repeating with ill nature, how " incredible and inconceivable it was, that you should not have imparted your secret to her :" this has given such a wound to her self-love, that at this moment you must not expect your letters will have that effect on her which you hope for. But her heart is so good, she loves you so tenderly, and has so much frankness and vivacity in her disposition, that it is impossible she should long retain these disagreeable impressions.

Mont. *d'Offalis* does not go to his regiment till the first of June : and I shall set out the same day for Languedoc. How happy, my dear aunt, shall I be to find myself in your arms, after an absence of upwards of four months ! To see my uncle again ; the amiable *Théodore*, and the charming little *Adelaide* ! And, ah, how cruel will it be to be separated again from these objects so dear to my heart ! Adieu, my dear aunt ; do not forget your eldest, your adopted child,

who every moment of her life thinks of you, and loves you as much as she admires and respects you.

My little twins are perfectly well; they begin to pronounce some words both of French and English: and they already afford me the greatest pleasure I am able to enjoy in your absence.

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## LETTER IV.

*Viscountess d'Limours, to the Baroness d'Almane.*

YOU say one must not find fault with a friend, when she is two hundred leagues off. But is it also necessary one must pardon her, if she fails in all the duties of friendship? If you know any maxim which enforces this doctrine, you will do well to quote it, for that alone can support your argument. You say I pout, and am in the fullens, but it is no such thing. I do not pout, but I am wounded and vexed to the very bottom of my soul! You have no nearer relation, not even Madaine *d'Ostalis*, since I am your first cousin, and she is only your niece in the thousandth degree. You had not a more tender friend, nor one who had known you longer; and yet in the only occasion of your life, when you could have given me the strongest proof of your confidence, you treat me as a stranger! surely this is enough to make me angry! *It was not entirely your own secret, it was another's!* You go away for four years! My God, what a slave you

you are become! "Mons. *d'Almane* prevented  
"you from telling it," in other words "he forbids  
"you." You are to be sure a most submissive  
wife, and he is an imperious tyrant. Now indeed  
I can hear Mons. *d'Limours*' secrets without even  
being tempted to disclose them to you. But whilst I was persuaded you loved me, I should  
have betrayed all the husbands in the world for  
you: you have convinced me I was wrong, and  
I will correct myself. You pretend to say I might  
have divined what you dared not to tell me,  
because you was "melancholy" at supper; now  
as I never saw you remarkably gay, and as your  
avocations often made you serious, I confess I was  
not struck with this pretended sadness. Besides,  
as it was only the eve of your departure; suppos-  
ing I had discovered this project, which had been  
for two years determined on, I should not have  
been more satisfied with you. I know you set  
little value on the opinion of the world, when  
your honour is not concerned; and it is happy  
for you that it is so in this particular instance,  
for at present you are universally blamed. It  
is thought strange you should go and educate  
your children in the farthest part of Langue-  
d<sup>oc</sup>, when you had a delightful estate only six  
leagues from Paris, where you might have lived  
retired without abandoning your friends, and  
without being deprived of the assistance of those  
masters you will stand in need of, where you are:  
some people say you have fixed on this plan  
from motives of vanity, that you may appear to  
make a greater sacrifice: others, and the greater  
part, say that you are ruined; and that the dis-  
rangement of your affairs is the sole cause of your

quitting Paris. There are many other conjectures formed, but they are so absurd they are not worth relating. What reply can I make to all these opinions? Only that *the Sun is brighter in Languedoc than it is in Paris, or its environs.* This is the only reason you have as yet given me; doubtless, you have many others, therefore I intreat you will acquaint me with them. It will be cruel for me to be always silent, when I hear you accused of caprice and inconsistency. Adieu! . . . . It is not an adieu for a few hours, it is for four years, perhaps for ever! What a pleasant thought this is. How does one melancholy idea soften the heart? My eyes are filled with tears! I am now scarcely angry with you, but I am afflicted, I am melancholy to the greatest degree! Write to me, write to me immediately, and be very particular in your accounts. You see what malice I have been capable of, and at the same time how weak I am! After this acknowledgment, I may still confess I shall ever love you, and that it is impossible for me to live without telling you so, and without knowing that you are perfectly convinced of it.

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## LETTER V.

*Baroness d'Almane to the Viscountess  
d'Limonrs.*

HOW much do I owe to that "melancholy idea," which presented me four such tender and sweet lines! Although you have at present

sent forgiven me, with so much kindness and generosity, I am still apprehensive we may have more disputes ; but, however, attend to all that may serve to justify me. I never was fond of the bustle and amusements of the gay world, and you know with what ardour and anxiety I wished for children, and how much of my time has been employed during my whole life, in whatever concerned their education. Married at seventeen years of age, and not being a mother till I was twenty-one, I was apprehensive I should never enjoy that happiness for which I had so ardently wished, and to make myself as much amends as I possibly could for this disappointment, I adopted Madame *d'Ostalis* ; she was at that time ten years old, and was of an excellent disposition. I educated her with all the care of which I was then capable ; and every body was pleased with the method I had pursued. My scholar at fifteen, was the most distinguished young person of her age, for her talents, knowledge, and disposition. I alone was sensible by the experience I had acquired, that I could do much better in future. *J. J. Rousseau* says, “ Most people chuse Governors for their children who have been accustomed to that employment. But this is too much to expect ; the same man can never compleat more than the education of one.” Experience has proved to me that *Rousseau* opposes an opinion well founded : the deepest study of the human heart, with every talent united, which is so essentially necessary in a Tutor, will avail nothing, without that experience which alone can be acquired by long practice. It was with great concern I made this

discovery, yet it increased the extreme desire I always had for children ; certain, that the greatest pleasure of my life would be to dedicate my time to their improvement. I cannot express what I felt at being disappointed of such happiness. Heaven at length heard my prayer: the birth of *Theodore*, and that of *Adelaide* a twelve-month after, made me the happiest creature in the world. I had already finished some Works on Education. I laboured at it again with such earnestness, that it affected my health ; I then found I could not follow my plan in the extent I wished, without breaking those bonds of society to which custom subjects us : in short, I saw it was necessary either to quit the world, or to renounce for ever the project I had formed, and which was so dear to my heart. Mons. *d'Almane* was entirely of my opinion, and he declared himself determined to leave Paris, as soon as *Theodore* had reached his seventh year. The difficulty was, what retreat to fix upon ? We were desirous of inspiring our children with a taste for humble pleasures, and of removing them far from the pomp and magnificence of the metropolis. Could we therefore have been contented to go to a villa we had at only six leagues from Paris ? Would it have been possible to prevent our acquaintance from following us thither ? Would not *Adelaide* and *Theodore* have heard every day of Operas, Comedies, &c. And how could we have prevented their regretting these amusements, which they would have heard mentioned with so much pleasure ? The result of these reflections, and many others, determined our preference of an estate of Mons. *d'Almane's*, in the province of Languedoc ;

guedoc ; where we should meet with freedom and retirement. From that moment Mons. *d'Almane* began to arrange every thing at the castle for our reception. If you wish to know in what manner we have furnished our apartments, I will give you an exact description of it in my next letter. And now, my dear friend, I must intreat you for one moment to put yourself in my place ; do not judge me by yourself, formed as you are for society, and to give and receive pleasure in the high stile of life which you have been used to ; but represent me in the way you have always found me, fond of study and attention to my domestic duties, unable to bear restraint, where no rational aim was in view ; and indifferent to the last degree to those trifling matters, which employ so many people in the world ; I find myself interested in things only which are useful ; not conceiving it possible to have any desire to please those we do not love, and detesting grand entertainments, dress, and cards ; in short, expecting and looking for happiness only in my children, have I not followed the course most suitable to my disposition ? And can you after this accuse me of "caprice ?" It is very true, as you observe, my children can have no masters in Languedoc ; but Mons. *d'Almane* and I shall be able to supply their places, at least during their infancy. Besides, I have with me two persons well qualified to instruct children, who will remain here till their education is compleated. When four years are elapsed, I mean to spend all my winters at Paris, and then I shall procure all the masters we shall think necessary to finish their improvements. Now confess, my dear friend ;

friend; had I communicated this scheme to you two years ago, would you have thought yourself much obliged to me? No persons love to have secrets entrusted to them, but when you communicate them by way of asking advice. Our resolution was not to be shaken; so that in trusting the secret to you, we should have only exposed ourselves to oppositions and to arguments which could only have vexed both parties, and perhaps have produced a mutual coolness. Here, my dear friend, is a part of my justification. When you know the plan of education we have formed, you will be more convinced how indispensably necessary it was for us to leave Paris. Let the world censure me as it pleases, the testimony of my own conscience will easily console me for their injustice, provided I can but attain the approbation of my friend. Those who make a sacrifice of their pleasures to their duty, may be sure the publick will turn to ridicule actions which are influenced by such laudable motives; and will find out imaginary causes to take away all their merit. This unjust way of judging is not always the effect of envy, but frequently takes place without any ill intention; for in effect the greater part of mankind are unable well to believe motives of which they themselves do not see the propriety, in which case their incredulity is more flattering than their approbation. In short, my dear friend, if you approve my conduct, and will always love me, I shall be satisfied, and perfectly happy.

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## LETTER VI.

*Viscountess d'Limours to the Baroness.*

OUR disputes always end in the same manner. I find you in the right, and I am obliged to confess my faults ; and I perceive this will ever be the case between us. Yes, my dear friend, you are still right, when the motives of your conduct are explained, however I may find fault with you on the first appearance, in which I constantly see irregularity. Your plans always succeed well in the end. This is at present as much as I can allow you. But I cannot answer for its being my last word upon this subject. You have acted in every respect according to your disposition and sentiments. And though your scheme should not succeed so well as I suppose, you are setting an example, which in these days must have great merit ; therefore it is impossible for me to disapprove your conduct any longer. Nothing can be more like than the picture you draw of yourself. At each word I read, I cried out, " how true that " is !" And I then said to myself, but how can I love a person so tenderly, who bears so little resemblance to myself ! You, who have so much knowledge, must explain this to me. Friendship has its caprices as well as love. All you have told me concerning the education of Madame *d'Ofalis*, has struck me in the most lively manner. I sincerely think, there can be no mother who would not be proud of such a daughter ; yet from your sentiments I apprehend, if *Adelaide* has

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as good a disposition, she will infinitely surpass her. This, however, is a melancholy consideration for eldest daughters, since it is the youngest only who can be compleatly educated. How then is this inconvenience to be remedied? There must be some method, and you ought to employ yourself in finding it out. Think about it, I intreat you. I am this day thirty-one years old. I have a daughter in her fifteenth year. It is time I should renounce some of the follies of the world, which I have hitherto been engaged in; and, perhaps, it may be even now too late for me to repair the faults I have committed in *Flora's* education. Her sister, you know, is only five years old. Inform me of the plan you have laid out for *Adelaide*, and I will pursue it with as much steadiness as I possibly can in my situation. I have the greatest desire to render her worthy of being one day your daughter-in-law. Instruct me, guide me, my dear friend! How delightful will it be for me to be indebted to you for new virtues, and consequently for new sources of happiness! You have known me very gay and dissipated; but indeed my faults are more to be attributed to the neglected education I received, than to my natural disposition. When I first entered into the world, having just left the couvent, one single idea had possession of my mind, which was that of making myself amends for a long and painful slavery, by entering into all the pleasures and amusements of life. All the instructions I received at that time was how to dress myself to advantage, and to dance well. I never missed an assembly; and the consequence was, that towards the end of the winter, I had an inflammation in my lungs, which I thought would

would have been fatal, and I was in debt to my mantua maker, fifteen thousand livres! You see how tractable I was, and how strictly I followed the advice you gave me. Nevertheless, I can assure you with the greatest truth, that dissipation never charmed me but in idea, and I always returned from those noisy and tumultuous scenes, with a weariness and disgust, which ought to have convinced me, that they were not designed for me, at least not in the degree I had imagined. Yet I suffered myself to be led to them again by custom and complaisance. And thus it is I have passed my life; giving myself up to the pleasures of the world without loving them, and committing follies which my reflection condemned. And what is the consequence of all this? I enjoy not one agreeable recollection; my health is impaired; and now, when it is too late, I regret the time past. My vivacity is much talked of. I myself do not think it is natural to me; though I am praised for the appearance of it, you, who seem so serious in your manner, are in reality much more cheerful than I am. I never saw you entertain "gloomy ideas," you know not what they mean. But as to myself, I am sometimes seized on a sudden with the most melancholy thoughts, and they present themselves to my imagination at the most unseasonable times, and even when I have been in the gayest humour. For instance, I find myself at this moment so sad and so peevish, that I will not lengthen my letter. Adieu, my dear friend! send me the description of your castle, and all the other accounts you have promised me. I received a letter yesterday from my brother; he appears charmed with his young Prince, and every day congratulates him-

himself on having undertaken his education. There is certainly much honour to be acquired, in well educating a Prince born to sovereignty. But it will cost my brother dear; for is it not a cruel sacrifice to be banished from one's own country for twelve years? He desires me to tell you, that the plan you have formed adds still more to the high esteem and attachment with which you have always inspired him, and that he will himself write to the Baron, to express to him the admiration he has conceived for you both. You most certainly set excellent examples, but such are not always the most useful; for if it be difficult to avoid praising you, it is still more difficult to imitate you.

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## LETTER VII.

*The Baroness to the Viscountess.*

YOU ask me so many questions, it is impossible one letter should contain all you desire to know. But since you are fond of particulars, be assured I shall not be sparing of them, as nothing can give me more pleasure than to inform you of my employments, and to receive an account of whatever interests you. Is it then so necessary for us to see each other, in order to give and receive proofs of our mutual regard? Friendship, that pure and disinterested sentiment, is nourished and strengthened by absence. Absence also serves to prove to us the constancy and sincerity of the attachment. The pleasure of writing to each other,

other, the delightful intercourse between two hearts united by esteem and confidence is perhaps one of our greatest delights ; and in this case there does not exist that cold conformity of sentiment which you meet with amongst persons who are drawn together by mere chance, without any other ties : for you are never enslaved but by choice and inclination. This intimate correspondence of thoughts is an enjoyment as new as it is interesting. Besides, one finds in absence many other advantages. All defects in the temper and disposition disappear ; you only see in your friend's letter, her tenderness, her understanding, and her amiable qualities. No disputes can arise, no opposition can occasion a coolness ! but it is not an account of my sentiments you ask for, it is my plan of education. It will not be in one letter, nor in a correspondence of three months, that I can explain it to you in its utmost extent ; for it is only by giving you examples, that it will be possible for me to communicate to you my ideas, and nothing but the history of *Adelaide*, can sufficiently inform you of my system and opinions. You must therefore consider, my dear friend, whether you will have courage to support the fatigue of those minute recitals, which will only describe to you the actions of a child of six years of age ; her employments, faults, and improvements, the questions she puts to us, and our answers. I should first acquaint you with the persons we brought here to assist us, and I begin with Miss *Bridget*, with whom you are already acquainted, and on whose account you, and many others, ridiculed my idea of sending to England for a person to teach *Adelaide* the language of that country,

country, when she was only six months old. I have not forgot your raillery upon that subject, and the stupidity you attributed to my plan of giving a governess to a baby in swaddling clothes. And though I told you that manner of teaching children the living languages, was universally established all over Europe, except in France, nothing could stop the unmerciful career of your wit. It is very true I ought not to reproach you with it, as you have certainly made ample amends by the surprize and admiration you expressed at the first English words spoken by *Theodore* and *Adelaide*, who at this time, to your great astonishment, speak English as well as they speak French. Miss *Bridget* will remain with us till their education is perfected; and though you could not bear to see her with her long waist, and her stiff stays, to which she has used herself these five and forty years, yet she will be very useful to me, for she has great good sense, an even temper, and a perfect knowledge of English literature. A young man named *d'Ainville*, some of whose little drawings I believe you have seen, is also with us; he is by birth an Italian, paints delightfully, and you would find him more agreeable than Miss *Bridget*, for he has cheerfulness, wit, and genius. With regard to our servants, (as the number we had at Paris, would be very troublesome here) we have only retained those on whom we could depend. You are quite right in supposing Mademoiselle *Blondin* would follow me, but *Lucile* was too proud to think of it; therefore I have taken in her place a young woman who understands embroidery, and all other works of ingenuity; for I would have *Adelaide* instructed in all these feminine amusements, and

and not despise them because she has been taught other branches of knowledge. At Paris you know Miss *Bridget* used to dine in her own chamber; but as we live here quite in a family way, she and *d'Ainville* both eat with us: and as you know her pride, you may easily guess how much on this account she prefers Languedoc to Paris. She is also continually praising the pleasures of a country life, and the happiness which is to be found in solitude. And now, my dear friend, that I have given you an account of our household, I will proceed to inform you of my daily employment. I rise at seven o'clock; from that hour till nine, my time is taken up with my toilet, breakfast, and other family affairs. I go then to chapel, and if there is time afterwards, walk till eleven, I then take *Adelaide* into my apartment, where I make her read to me, and repeat some little stories made on purpose for her to get by heart. And we talk together till twelve, when we all assemble to dinner. As soon as dinner is over, we either walk in the garden for an hour, or amuse ourselves in the saloon, with maps, drawings, or conversation. At two, we return to our respective apartments, *Adelaide* always with me, whom she never quits but to take a walk for exercise. I write till four, without interruption, whilst *Adelaide* amuses herself with running and playing about the room. At five, *d'Ainville* brings *Theodore* to take a lesson of drawing with his sister for an hour, during which I continue my writing. When they have finished, they bring me what they have done, which I blame or approve according to its merit. *Theodore* then returns to his father, and I again employ myself with *Adelaide*, either teaching her arithmetic

metic with counters, or talking on different subjects till seven o'clock. I afterwards play on the harp or harpsichord till half past eight, when we go to supper. At nine the children go to bed, and we stay and converse about them for an hour longer. I then go to my chamber, and read for another hour, when I retire to my bed, perfectly satisfied with the manner in which I have been employed, and can say to myself, here is a day gone, but it is not lost. I go to sleep thinking of my children. I see them in my dreams, and I awake again with the desire of continuing these pleasing cares. In my next I will give you the rest of the particulars you have desired, but it is time to end this letter. I will now talk to you about your daughters. Are you better satisfied with *Flora*? Is my sweet little *Constantia* as gentle, and as sensible as ever? Ah! improve that amiable disposition of hers, you have understanding enough, and you love her with sufficient tenderness, to make it very easy to you to educate her as perfectly as I wish. If it be true, as I make no doubt it is, that you have resolved to stay more at home, to go seldom to public places, to give up balls and operas, and to keep early hours, you will be one of the best, as well as the tenderest of mothers!

## LETTER VIII.

*Answer from the Viscountess.*

IT is very easy for you to say, go no more to public places, renounce balls, operas, &c. But what am I to put in their places? I no longer delight in them, yet how otherwise can I fill up my time? *Flora* is fourteen; she knows nothing, has no taste for any accomplishment but dancing, and this misfortune is not without remedy. Her sister is only four years old, consequently she cannot take up the whole day. One is too old for my cares to be of any use, the other too young to want them at present. What then must I do with all the time you would give me? I see your indignation at this distance. I hear you say, "Why not read and reflect, and wait till you can act?" All this is mighty well, but reading hurts my eyes, and reflection is death to me. Besides, you have read and reflected enough for us both. I still entirely rely on your advice; you shall dictate what I must say and do, I shall punctually execute it. Only do not require study or meditation of me, I am incapable of it. But I promise you to keep the secret, and to be very tractable. To be serious; I cannot take a better method; I distrust my own understanding, and depend on yours. It is better to take a person for our guide, whose sense we are convinced of, than to employ our own, when we are in doubt that we shall not be able to succeed.

I wait with impatience for the rest of the particulars you have promised me, certain they will

be

be interesting, and that I shall be able to draw from them the most useful and instructive lessons. I have been too little accustomed to study to make it possible for you to fix my attention to precepts and maxims. I must have pictures and examples of real life. However, I desire you will give me a general idea of the principles in which you mean to instruct your girl. Teach me the useful qualities that should be cultivated, and the errors which appear to you the most dangerous. And lastly, the manner of instruction which you think most proper. It is strange that I should not be perfectly acquainted with all your sentiments on this subject. You are wholly employed with your children, yet you never talk of them. I should be very glad to find, even in your letters, the accounts which I might have obtained from your conversation, as their being put into order, and the ideas connected, will fix them more indelibly in my mind.

Ah ! my dear friend, I am but little satisfied with *Flora*, she will be more giddy, and more coquettish, than ever her mother was. I know not if your scholar will ever equal you. But for me, I am certain of being surpassed by mine. I laugh upon this subject at the same time it shocks and confounds me, and I assure you I am greatly affected to perceive my daughter has not those amiable qualities which are necessary to my happiness. It is true, when I was young, I was as lively, gay, and inconsiderate as she is. But at the same time I did not want understanding, sensibility, or generosity. Therefore I only was guilty of little indiscretions ; and if malice sometimes endeavoured to wound my reputation, I still preserved the esteem

esteem of my friends. Was I sure that *Flora* had a good heart, I should flatter myself with being able to correct her faults. Sometimes I have hopes of it, and at others am absolutely discouraged. As for my little *Constantia*, she is my sole delight; she is possessed of the sweetest temper imaginable, and there never was a child who promised more.

And so the prudish, the formal, the learned Miss *Bridget*, dines at the same table with you. I really think she has reason to be proud! I have often heard her say "she was surprized," with such a vacant, composed countenance, that plainly proved it impossible that wonder should ever be expressed by it. But now I desire you to present my compliments to her, which I make no doubt will surprize her; but I want to be reconciled to her, as I wish to be regarded by every one who is near to you.

I cannot end this letter without telling you a story, which will furnish you with more than one reflection. The Chevalier *D.* and the Count *de C.* had about a fortnight ago a little dispute at cards, which however was no more thought of. The next night I supped with the godmother of Madame *d'Ofalis*, where was a great deal of company. They talked of this affair. The men were unanimous in thinking it of no consequence. But the Ladies were astonished they had not fought. Among others, Madame *de Sonanges*, with that masculine voice which you know she has, cried out, "What a strange unheard-of thing it was," and that if the Chevalier was her brother or her friend, she should certainly give him her opinion. This discourse was addressed to the Viscount *Blezac*, who not chusing to say any thing on the subject,

contented himself with smiling, and putting on a mysterious countenance. The company began then to repeat all the particulars of the story in whispers and exclamations of, "amazing! astonishing!" &c. At length it was decided that the Chevalier *D.* must challenge the Count *de C.* or be for the future deemed a coward. The next day he was informed of this sentence, and he considered it, as it was, a very absurd affair. But he had no alternative, and was obliged to challenge the Count. They went together to the frontiers of the kingdom. The poor Chevalier received three wounds, which had brought him to the point of death; though he is now out of danger, and recovers fast. This is the effect of the inconsiderate prattle of three or four foolish women. They consult their own interest very little when they presume to censure the conduct of the men, who can so easily revenge themselves on them; and it is more difficult for a virtuous woman to vindicate herself against reports propagated to her disadvantage, than for a brave man to labour under the aspersion of cowardice: and indeed we ought not to be surprized at our being so frequently slandered by the men, when we treat them with so little respect. Adieu, my dear friend! We have been already separated two long months. You say very pretty things upon absence; but for my part I find it insupportable when it deprives me of you! Send me the description of your castle.

LET.

## LETTER IX.

*Answer from the Baroness d'Almane.*

YOUR reflections on the adventure of the Chevalier are very just. It is not the first of the kind I have heard; and as you say, women, who allow themselves to criticise the conduct of men, and accuse them of playing ungenteely at cards, or of want of courage, well deserve the little respect men in general shew them.

You desire me, my dear friend, to give you a general idea of my plan of education. My first principle is to employ all my attention to preserve my girl from a fault common to almost all women, and which leads to so many others, coquetry. You say, my dear friend, that you have been a coquette. It is a character you have no pretensions to. The people with whom you have lived, custom, and bad examples, might have given you the appearance of it. But you were only so at times, and through caprice, not from your real sentiments; as you have always preserved your integrity and innocence of heart. This odious vice contracts the mind, renders it susceptible of the most ridiculous vexations. It extinguishes sensibility, and leads us into the most frightful errors. A coquette has neither principles nor virtue. She takes a cruel delight in inspiring sentiments she is determined to take no part in. To give pain, and prevent the fortunate union of two tender and gentle lovers, is the least of her guilty rôles. She is by turns delivered up to malice, and to the meanest jealousy. She would subject

every one to her humour, and would sacrifice to that desire, without remorse, both decency and virtue. This unruly passion, produced by the corruption of the heart, and the licentiousness of the imagination, when carried to excess, has no curb that will check it. By an artful dexterity, you may always lead a coquette beyond the bounds she had prescribed herself. You have only to irritate and mortify her pride, and you will conquer. But it is a contemptible victory, which is not worth the trouble it costs. There are some vices for which we must be inspired with a detestation. There are others which we must only turn into ridicule. This is the surest method of preserving people from those errors which the corruptions and customs of the age have made so common. Coquetry is of the number of those latter. Convince your scholar that the world only amuses itself with coquettes, that it despises them all the time it is flattering them, and your point is gained. Do not suffer her to be dazzled with the apparent success of the character, and she will easily be made sensible how odious it is. Above all, prevent her from thinking that beauty is her greatest charm. But take care not to inculcate this truth, by maxims which will weary her without convincing. Never praise any qualities with warmth or earnestness before her, but those of the mind and understanding, and she will be good through system and inclination. The education of men and women agree in this particular, that it is essential to both that their vanity should be placed on things of consequence, but it differs in almost every other respect. We must be very care

ful not to inflame the minds of women, or raise them above themselves. They are born for a domestic and dependent situation, and ought to possess mildness, sensibility, and a just way of reasoning. They should have resources against idleness, with great moderation in their inclinations, and no passions. Genius is for them a useless and a dangerous gift; it lifts them out of their proper sphere, or serves to disgust them with it. Love leads them astray. Ambition teaches them to intrigue; a taste for learning makes them appear singular, and deprives them of that domestic simplicity and tenderness, and of that society of which they are so great an ornament. Formed for the management of household matters, and for the education of their children, dependant on a husband, who by turns requires their submission and their council, it is necessary they should have method, prudence, patience, and a just way of thinking, that they may be able to converse with propriety on all subjects, and possess all those talents which render them pleasing; that they may have a taste for reading and reflection, without displaying their knowledge, and that they may feel the passion of love without giving themselves up to enthusiasm.

*Rousseau* says, one should not correct that disposition to artifice, so natural to women, because they stand in need of it in order to captivate those upon whom they depend. We might say the same of many other faults; for instance, of dissimulation, so odious in itself, and yet sometimes so necessary! Even falsehood has sometimes its use; but in one instance where these vices are of any advantage, how much more

frequently are they prejudicial ! There is nothing to be depended on but a constant practice of virtue. The vices, which are produced by the violence of our passions, are more pardonable than those which are derived from considerations of self-interest ; these last but too plainly shew a corruption of heart, and meanness of soul, to make them at all excusable. An artful woman may be able to govern a weak and narrow-minded husband, when without that quality she could have gained his confidence ; but it will never procure her the esteem and attachment of a sensible man.

You ask me for the description of the castle. I shall be sure in giving it you to expose myself to your raillery ; but you will have it, and I must comply. *Montaigne* says, “ Walking in a confined room does not tire one so much, although we take three times the number of steps as walking in the fields or road.” So our lessons pass away, as if by chance, without being confined to time or place, and by mixing in all our actions, take effect without our being sensible of it, &c. &c. Remember this passage when you read my account.

We have taken up our habitation on the ground floor of the castle. The entrance leads by a vestibule to an eating parlour, which is lighted by a sky light, and the walls of which are painted in fresco, with Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. From this room we go into a very fine saloon, of a square form, having windows towards the garden. The hangings of this saloon contain pictures of the Roman History, painted in oil colours, and fixed in frames. The first contains medal-

medallions of the Seven Kings of Rome. Then follow those great men who have made the republic the most illustrious, and every Emperor as low down as Constantine. The opposite side of the room contains pictures of the most celebrated Roman Ladies, such as Lucretia, Ælia, Cornelia, Portia, and the Empresses to the time of Constantine. The other two sides of the saloon represent some chosen passages of the Roman History. The bottoms of the hangings are painted to imitate bas relief, and produces a pleasing effect. We have only the profiles of the Emperors and Empresses, which are good resemblances, having been taken from medals which we have in our possession; round each profile is written the name of the person represented, and in what year he died. You will agree that this tapestry sort of hanging is more instructive than damask; and I can assure you it is a hundred times more agreeable; neither does it cost so much, and it will last for ever. The doors are also made to represent subjects taken from Roman History. On the right and left of this saloon are two wings, which form Mons. *d'Almane's* apartments and mine, which is on the right hand as you come out of the saloon. We then enter a long gallery, which is painted in the same manner, to represent the Grecian History. At the end of this gallery, is my bed-chamber, where in like manner I have caused to be painted a part of the Holy Scriptures. My daughter's chamber joins to mine; it is hung with an English blue paper, ornamented with little coloured prints, which contain subjects taken from the History of France. These pictures may be removed at pleasure; and I

have written on their backs the explanation of every thing they contain. We have besides these, baths, a study, one half of which contains about four hundred volumes. The other is furnished with cabinets, which contain some minerals and corals, and a pretty collection of shells. This study looks towards a little conservatory, where I have a number of plants, which are clasped in order, having tickets on them, of which I keep the key. Mons. *d'Almane*'s apartments are exactly distributed like mine; so I shall only mention the paintings, which represent the Kings and Queens of France, together with all the great men and ministers, who have in any degree contributed to the glory or happiness of the kingdom. They are placed in the same medallion with the King who reigned in their time, which is an association that does honour to both. Henry the Fourth appears greater, with Sully at his side, as the merit of having chosen such a Minister, would alone be sufficient to immortalize a Prince. Mons. *d'Almane*'s, and his son's bed-chamber are furnished and ornamented with subjects relative to the military art, such as plans, fortifications, &c. and a closet which contains books, globes, spheres, &c. is the last room of this apartment. When we intend our children should survey these historical pictures in a methodical manner, we begin with my bed-chamber, which represents the Holy Scripture, from the Creation of the World. Thence we proceed to my gallery, where we meet with Ancient History; and so on to the saloon, which contains the Roman History. Then we finish our studies in the gallery belonging to Mons. *d'Almane*, which I have informed

informed you is filled with the History of France. With respect to mythology, we find that in our eating parlour, and it is generally the subject of our conversation during dinner. The second story contains five or six small spare rooms, and the attics are destined for our servants. The colonades and stair-case are hung from top to bottom with large maps, which form a complete system of geography. We have fixed on the ground floor for the place of our southern maps, and the second for our northern ; for by putting an attention to these things we make a better impression on childrens' minds. The whole furniture of the house is linen. The sculpture on the walls is plain white, with gilt beads. The stairs and chimney-pieces are white marble, and are every day washed clean. Over the front are written these words, *True happiness is of a retired nature, and an enemy to pomp.* Besides all these representations of history, which I have mentioned to you, I have, in a closet paved with marble, six large screens, which are made to give you an idea of the chronology of the histories of England, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Malta, and Turkey. I have also a great number of little hand screens, which are all maps of different countries, and on the backs I have written in English or Italian, a clear and short description of the places they represent. With respect to our gardens, they are equally plain and simple. We have preserved a little wood and two walks of chesnut trees. But our neighbours do not admire the alterations we have made, since we have taken down our cut hedges, and above all a wilderness, which for thirty years was the admiration of the whole province. However, the above alteration

is much more agreeable to us, and we have formed a delightful shade, about a hundred paces from the castle. The large grass plots and young plantations of foreign shrubs, also afford us very pleasant walks. You have often heard me condemn the custom of raising mountains in gardens: I think them very disagreeable objects, when they do not strike us by the uncommon height to which they are elevated. However, I have formed three small ones in the park; not for the pleasure of admiring them, but to make the children climb up them, which is a kind of exercise that both amuses and strengthens them.

I have not yet mentioned my neighbours. I am at present only intimately acquainted with the Countess *de Valmont*, who lives about two leagues from hence. She has only one son, who is twelve years of age, and for whom she feels such an extreme tenderness, that I was prejudiced in her favour from the first moment I saw her. She is still young and beautiful. She has much dignity in her manner, and a negligence which adds grace to her most trifling actions. Besides this, she has wit, and an improved and cultivated mind; she speaks but little, not through timidity, but indolence, and never wishes to shine or to fix attention. She is sister to Madame *Dolby*, whom you must have seen, and who has given so many balls ten years ago. She has another sister, who is a Nun. Her father, Mons. *d'Aimeri*, is a man of great learning, as Mons. *d'Almane* informs me. But since the death of an only son, whom he adored, he has retired to this province, and lives with his favourite daughter, Madame *de Valmont*. He is very absent and melancholy, but his conversation,

sation, though always serious, is often instructive and agreeable. Mons. *d'Valmont* has neither the sense nor graces of his wife, nor the merit of his father-in-law. He understands playing at billiards and shuttle-cock perfectly, and is passionately fond of shooting and hunting. He has rather a boisterous kind of mirth, but at the same time has so cheerful a countenance, with so ruddy and smiling an appearance, and is above all so frank, good humoured, and polite, that you cannot help having a regard for him. But I begin to perceive, my dear friend, though too late perhaps for you, that I have written a volume. Farewell. If you do not send me an answer of at least four pages, I shall not dare again to send you letters of such an extreme length; and pray do not write to me on that little paper you are so fond of; keep it for your Paris friends; for my part I am always angry when I see your writing on those little painted ready made covers which you use. I beg you will tell me something of Madame *d'Ostalis*; do you see her frequently, and does not my absence make her neglect her improvements?

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## LETTER X.

*Viscountess to the Baroness.*

WHAT a picture have you sent me of coquetry; it will cure me of all pretensions to it! I shall never again boast of being a coquette, and I shall all my life repent ever having had the appearance of one! You have really made a deep

impression on me, but why did you not tell me all this when I was but twenty years old ? My reformation would then have done you more honour, and would have spared me much pain. But you tell me I was only half a coquette. I used to think so myself ; but are you sure of it ? You have really troubled my conscience ! Pray never talk to me of coquetry again. Oh, the wicked thing ! If you knew the situation I was in when I received your letter ! That I was on the edge of a precipice, which perhaps you have drawn me from ! I perceive your astonishment, but I can conceal nothing from you. You will see what confidence I repose in you, but you are so indulgent, so superior to the weaknesses of our sex ; you know how to excuse them all ! Attend then, and by the confession I am going to make, judge of the services you have done me ! You know my principles, and you are very sure, that whatever follies I may have to reproach myself with, at least my heart remains pure. I have been indiscreet enough to give the world room to say I had a lover. But it was not believed ; and for some years my conduct has been thought irreproachable ; for the world, a hasty judge, though an impartial one, retracts with as good a grace as it condemns. Well, my dear friend, let us come to the fact. I thought when I was one-and-thirty, I had nothing more to fear from envy, from coquetry, or from men ! Is it not well, said I, that I have preserved my reputation ; I have passed the age in which one is subject to such dangerous trials, and it is a happy thing to find one is no longer young enough to be in danger from them. But I was deceived. *M. de Merville*, whom you left so engaged with Madame

dame *de C*—, all on a sudden, I know not how, took it in his head to fall in love with me. I never could indure this change of his sentiments in my favour. But he was young, a man quite fashionable, and he had sacrificed to me a young woman of three-and-twenty. Though my heart remained entirely free, I bore his attentions. I received him at my house; in short, I did every thing in my power to keep him my slave! This scheme was scarcely formed, when I received your last letter. My surprise is not to be told! Every feature in the picture of a coquette seemed drawn for me; every word appeared to reproach me, and this sentence more than all the rest! *To disturb the union of two tender and gentle lovers, is one of its smallest crimes.* M. *de Merville* is free, Madame *de C*— a widow! I represented her to myself, in despair! I saw a marriage broken, a reputation destroyed: in short, I found I was a monster. I hated myself, and detested Mons. *de Merville*. I lamented the fate of Madame *de C*—, and loved no body but you and her! I ought to tell you, Mons. *de Merville* had never acquainted me with his passion: these declarations are now useless, and out of fashion; one can understand without that ceremony. He and Madame *de C*— were one evening engaged to sup with me. But you may imagine he came before the rest of the company. I was alone, and he seized this opportunity so favourable to him, and in short, explained himself in the most earnest manner. I affected an extreme surprise, which is not difficult to put on, and by which there are very few men who are not deceived. And in order to convince him how serious I was, I mentioned his engagements to

Madame

Madame *de C*—. I praised her to the highest degree, I even extolled her wit with enthusiasm; which you must allow was going a great length. But I had much to repair. Mons. *de Merville*, truly amazed and confounded at losing all his hopes, put an end the same instant to the declaration of that tender passion which he had just been describing. We made mutual protestations of friendship, and company coming in, were released from a conversation which began to be as languid as it was tedious. Once more reconciled to myself, I felt an inward satisfaction, far preferable to that foolish infatuation caused by flattery. I had more merit in this conquest over myself than I ever had had before, as I never till then had given myself up to such an excess of coquetry. Explain this to me, for I have no idea how it was. But it is certain, I now feel the consequences of this horrible vice too much, ever to fall into it again. Therefore never fear for me, be certain, I am corrected for ever.

The description of your castle delighted me much; but that of coquettes took from me for a long time all that vivacity which you seem so much to dread. So that for this time you will only receive my praises: and indeed I believe I shall never more criticize such useful inventions, which have spared your children the humble fatigue of learning a number of dates, which are all forgotten when they grow up. I apprehend this method of yours will engrave chronology on their memories; for the order in which these medallions are placed, and being constantly before their eyes, will prevent their ever forgetting them. By putting one's self to a still greater expence, I should think

think this invention might be brought to still greater perfection, by making every piece of furniture, as chairs, carpets, &c. to represent objects of instruction, and then replacing them by others, when they had got these by heart. There are many who could easily afford to be at this expence; certainly the idea should be adopted by all Princes, and I shall assuredly send your description to my brother, as I am certain he will avail himself of it for his pupil. I have some doubts to propose to you on that part of your letter concerning women. It appears to me, that you require a union of amiable qualities and talents, which can only fall to the lot of a very small number. You would have a woman posseſſ solid reasoning, with all the important virtues: a general, though not a deep knowledge of the sciences; all the powers of pleasing, a knowledge of all the modern languages, without pedantry or affectation; and that, in short, she should conduct her domestic affairs like a good housewife, who pretends to no other merit. I see plainly, if your pupil is born with a superior understanding, you may make her truly accomplished: but do you expect it, if she has only a common one, and an indifferent memory? It appears to me that a plan of education ought neither to be made for prodigies or monsters. Stupidity and depravity are as rare as heroism and genius. But it is for persons of moderate talents we ought to labour, as from them we may expect most success. With regard to talents, is it not necessary the inclination should assist your cares? I had all kinds of masters. I learned Geography, Arithmetic, History, and Music. Ten years I played on the harpsichord, and learned to draw,  
but

but yet I understood nothing of all this. For dancing I had a real taste, and six months instruction made me one of the best dancers in the school. Besides, I can scarcely believe that the length of time one is obliged to give to these kind of studies, is not extremely hurtful to the production and growth of more essential qualities. I know you may be quoted as an exception to this rule; but I only speak in general. You went to cultivate the understanding, and form the mind of your daughter. How can you do this, if she learns to embroider, to draw, to dance, to sing, and to play on several instruments? In short, you propose teaching her so many things, that I am in pain for her health, and I cannot persuade myself, but that such application must be dangerous to a child.

You desire I will mention Madame *d'Ostalis*. I have most pleasing accounts to give you of her. She conducts herself always with the same prudence, as if she was before your eyes, and she is as much distinguished for her reputation as for her person and charms. She has an equal and unalterable sweetness of temper, and a certain serenity, which gives me pleasure to contemplate, because one feels that it proceeds from the perfect calm of her mind, and the purity of her heart. The women pardon her talents and her beauty, on account of her modesty and simplicity; and the men, notwithstanding her youth, truly respect her, because she has neither prudery, nor the least appearance of coquetry. She almost lives with me, that she may talk about you; she loves you with so much tenderness, that that alone would render her dear to me, had she no other merit.

We

We supped last night in a family way. There was a serious party at Reversis. The players were Madame *d'Ostalis*, her husband, the Marchioness *Amelia*, and my daughter. The game, as you know, is rather noisy, and the *forced knaves*, made it much more so, that you can have no idea of the noise they made; Madame *d'Ostalis*, with all her mildness, laughed as much as the rest, so that she was hoarse the whole evening after. Her gaiety is blended with a frankness which makes her perfectly amiable. She is thought to be breeding, and in that case must give over all thoughts of a journey to Languedoc; which puts her quite in despair. Mons. *d'Ostalis*, who so passionately desires to have a son, does not share in her griefs on this account; and this difference of sentiment, has already caused some little quarrels, but you may easily imagine they are not ill-natured ones.

Adieu, my dear friend! I hope you will not complain of my paper, and that you will find this large enough. You shall have no more of those little painted sheets, which displease you so much. I know better how to dispose of them. I wanted the other day to send an answer to a Lady, to whom I had no attachment, nor she for me; and I had only some common compliments to send to her, that every body says by heart. By mistake I sealed up one of these little ornamented sheets, but without writing any thing in it. When I found it out, I thought my billet was at least as good as her's, and I wished to establish the custom of sending notes in this manner instead of returning visits one's self. There are many of these notes, which contain little more than the name of the person, and that you may find on your visiting-list. Many women

women are very clever in the art of writing notes, and express themselves with great eloquence. Madame *de F.* for example, is persuaded her's will pass to posterity: this would be but just indeed, for it costs her great labour to deserve this honour. The most trifling subject becomes brilliant in her hands. She wrote me a most charming billet a week ago, to excuse her supping with me on account of her having a cold. But yesterday I received another from her, which surpassed all the rest. It was to borrow my box at the Opera. The subject does not appear capable of furnishing new or lofty ideas, but in a note of eight lines, she had collected grace, gaiety, sentiment, and delicacy. I felt myself fired with a noble emulation. I was willing to try my skill. But to my confusion, though I considered and studied for a long time, nothing came into my head by way of answer, but the downright matter of fact, that I was very sorry I had already lent my box, as she wished to have had it; and this dull reply I was obliged to send her, which has certainly lowered me in her esteem.

Adieu then, my dear friend! Kiss the dear little *Adelaide* tenderly for me. *Constantia*, who is for ever talking of you, desires I will send you a kiss for her. She grows every day prettier, and more pleasing. She has been a little indisposed, but is now perfectly well again. Now I think of it, I beg you will communicate to me your notions on the medical treatment of children. I am not easy about *Flora*'s health. I think she has been brought up with too much delicacy, and that she has had too much physic given her in her infancy. What regimen do you follow for *Adelaide*, and what do you think of *Rousseau*'s method?

L E T-

## LETTER XI.

*Answer from the Baroneſſe d'Almane.*

MONS. *de Merville* has inspired you with stronger sentiments of coquetry, than you ever had before ! This is indeed surprising ! You ask me the reason of your caprices ? You put me on a difficult task ; but since you desire it, these were the reflections I made on your adventure. I think there is one time of life very dangerous for women, who are not entirely free from coquetry. It is when they are still handsome, but no longer possess the brilliancy and charms of youth, nor are talked of for their elegance of person, which now ceases to attract admiration. In short, as soon as it is said of a woman, she is still handsome ; that *still* spoils the compliment. It begins at your age, and finishes at five or six-and-thirty, for then we are no longer regarded, and this misfortune frequently happens even much sooner. It appears to me very natural that a woman of thirty, who is no longer flattered by that eager crowd who formerly surrounded her, should set a greater value on the attentions paid her. Formerly she thought they could not help falling in love with her ; at present she is almost grateful for it ; as she knows it is not her beauty which is any longer sought after ; the empire which she had gained over the world by her charms is gone, not to be retrieved. She is like a Queen, who being dethroned, no longer perceives her Courtiers around her, and is only the more afflicted by perceiving the neglect with which she is treated. She has renounced the glory

glory of conquering numbers, but she is still possessed with the hope of inspiring an ardent passion. The first man who pays her any attention, she will suppose to be the object she has in view, and whatever her lover may be, she will find her vanity more gratified at this time than ever she did in her youth. But how will she reconcile herself to the vexatious idéa, that he is perhaps the last she will be able to hold in her chains? What gratitude does she not owe him? It is then, that coquetry makes use of all its cunning and dexterity. It is then, that she enjoys her triumph, and makes it known to the world; and it is then, that this lover, if he is not a fool, may destroy a woman's reputation, and deprive her of happiness, even without being beloved by her. This picture is very like that of Madame \*\*\*, whom we admired so much for her beauty and elegance. She was so disdainful to her lovers, that she had the art of attracting them without appearing to be sensible of it; and after having preserved her reputation two and thirty years, lost it on a sudden, with the man in the world, least able to justify such an error! This, my dear friend, is part of my sentiments on this subject. But as I do not speak by experience, I may be deceived. You are a better judge; and from the situation of your mind, can tell me whether my conjectures are true or false; therefore I refer to you. I am not surprised that you experienced a thousand times more satisfaction in reconciling Mons. *de Merville* to poor Madame *de C.* than you had found in parting them. The pleasures of self-love, as transient as vain, cannot leave deep impressions: they are only produced by imagination, whose flame is soon extinguished, if the allurement of novelty does not re-kindle

kindle it. The pleasures of the heart, less tumultuous, but milder and more lasting, can alone ensure our felicity. These things, which make but a slight impression on our minds, only leave a weak remembrance, which instead of giving us pleasure, often afflicts us. Do you think an old coquette, in tracing back the most brilliant exploits of her youth, does not experience more regret than satisfaction. Regret, which is so much the more grievous, as it is shameful, and that one is obliged to conceal it. Whilst the remembrance of a virtuous behaviour is always an inexhaustible source of self-satisfaction.

And now, my dear friend, I am going to endeavour to answer your objections on the principles of education. You cannot conceive how I shall be able to improve the understanding of my pupil, and to form her heart, and at the same time to give her every agreeable qualification. In effect, if you suppose I have any hopes of seeing *Adelaide*, at twelve years old, an excellent musician, playing on several instruments, understanding History, Geography, Mythology, and accounts, with many of our best Works, &c. &c. your reflections would then have been perfectly just. But if such had been my plan, I needed only to have adopted the method commonly followed. But the little success obtained by these, has well justified the necessity of taking others. *Rousseau* observes, that the principal fault of every Tutor is from endeavouring to make his pupils shine, more than to convince their reason. With this intention, he gives them lessons which are above their comprehensions, and so load the memory, not with useful things, but with words that have in general no sense in them. *Adelaide*, at twelve

twelve years old, far from being a prodigy, will perhaps appear to some people infinitely less instructed than many other children of her age. She will not know a word of all those books which young people learn by heart. She will never have read Fontaine's Fables, Telemachus, Madame de Sevigny's Letters, the Works of Corneille, Racine, Crebillon, and Voltaire, &c. Is it not absurd to put all these books into the hands of a child, who can comprehend nothing of them, and by that means deprive her of the pleasure of reading them when her judgment is riper? *Adelaide*, at twelve years old, will neither be capable of making any extracts, or of writing good letters, or of assisting in doing the honours of my house. She will have but few ideas, but they will be rational ones. She will read music well, and play on several instruments. She will draw in a surprizing manner for her age, without her master's retouching any of her performances; and by that means teaching her to tell a falsehood, instead of improving her in the art of drawing. She will neither understand history, mythology, nor geography, except what she has gained by our tapestry conversation, and other methods, which I shall mention hereafter. In this respect I think she will be better instructed than children in general. She will have many other accomplishments, which will only be discovered by living with her, and which she has acquired in the form of amusements. That you may be able to form some idea of these, it will be necessary to acquaint you with some of the methods we have taken for this purpose. Children in general are born with memories sufficient to retain a great deal of useful knowledge; they ought therefore never to learn things

things that are unnecessary or superfluous ; and I know but two means of arriving at this end ; which are, never to tell them what they cannot understand, and never to neglect giving them every kind of instruction within their reach. For example, it is an easy matter to render all their little plays useful. The idea of my tapestries, or hangings, have given me another, of historical magic lanthorns. I have had four or five hundred glasses made to represent subjects taken from history ; and we have the diversion of the magic lanthorn four times a week. I take upon myself to shew it, and generally do it in English ; by this means I give them two lessons at once ; and as the pictures are often changed, I assure you *Adelaide* and *Theodore* are infinitely more delighted with our magic lanthorn, than the generality of children are with the sun, moon, and seven stars, the prodigal son, the baker pulling the devil by the tail, &c. &c. Instead of teaching my children the favourite amusement of building houses with cards, I have invented a play for them which gives them an idea of architecture. I have caused two small houses, and two palaces, to be made in pasteboard, which take to pieces ; every ornament belonging to architecture are to be found in them. They are all numbered, and their names written on the back. My son has, besides these, a number of fortified castles, with which *Adelaide* also amuses herself sometimes, as well as with a pretty little ship, of which Monsieur *d'Almane* explains to us all the parts of at least once a week.

When we walk out, the children divert themselves with running and skipping about, and in another year, we shall accustom them, as *Rousseau* advises, to measure distances by their eyes, how many

many trees there may be in such a walk, how many flower-pots on such a terrace, &c. &c. By this means they will learn what a foot, a fathom, or an acre means; and they will also acquire some notions of agriculture. My gardener, *Mathurine*, will be their chief master; he has already begun his lessons, and generally follows us in our walks; and we learn every day something new. *Adelaide* and *Theodore* have each a little garden, which *Mathurine* teaches them to cultivate; we accustom them to those plays which are recommended by *Rousseau*, to preserve them from the fears which children are so subject to, that of being in the dark. *Adelaide*, like other children, is fond of playing at visiting. This by my attentions will become a moral progress: I invent their plans, and you may imagine the little subjects I give them, serve to inspire them with noble sentiments; and that to teach them to behave properly, is the end to be obtained. Madame *de Valmont*'s son joins them in these plays, and I have often a part in it myself, which I endeavour to perform well. *Adelaide*'s doll is not useless to me. *Adelaide* repeats to her the lessons she receives from me. I pay great attention to these dialogues. If *Adelaide* scolds unjustly, I interfere in the conversation, and convince her she is wrong. This amusement makes her more industrious; if she wants an apron or a cap for her doll, Mademoiselle *Victoire*, one of my women, comes to assist her in making them. It is the same with *Theodore*, if he breaks any of his toys, as a coach or a druin, we give him proper materials; and *Brunel*, Mons. *d'Almane*'s footman, whose ingenuity you are acquainted with, makes whatever he desires, and by this means, he becomes industrious and patient. Thus you see, far from wearying

wearying them with too much application, we are only employed in procuring them amusements and play-things. The word study is never mentioned, though there is scarce a moment in the day that they do not gain some knowledge; and certainly there never were children so perfectly happy. *Adelaide* begins already to have some slight notion of music, and I have placed her little fingers on the harp. These different studies, with those of reading and drawing, take up near an hour and a half of the day, which, however, is not fixed to stated times. I have a method of practising music in two hands, which experience has taught me to be the best way. To arrive at perfection either on the harp or harpsichord, you must play equally well with both hands; the left is generally inferior to the right, owing to the method which masters take. Before they learn a complete tune, they ought to practice a twelve-month, first with one hand, then with the other; I mean if it is an infant; otherwise six months will do. They should by turns execute all the shakes and most difficult passages that are to be met with, by using the left hand, which is in fact more awkward than the right, and has less strength. This requires at the beginning so little attention from the scholar, that it cannot weary her. On the other hand, expecting her to read music, to place her hands properly to finger well, and to put treble and base together, requires much application, and is difficult and tiresome; besides, she is stopped by every cadence, and is so confounded that she plays out of time, which spoils her ear and her taste; and she very unjustly takes an aversion to a study so disagreeable and fatiguing. No master will adopt my method, because by following it they cannot

make their scholar in five or six months play by rote several tunes ; and I must confess there are many parents who would be very little pleased to see their daughters, after a years' instruction, only able to read their notes. But after this exercise, teach her to play lessons, and in less than three months she will surpass those who have learned three years in the common way. Nothing is more absurd than to teach children rules of accompaniment when they are only ten years old. This study is of a very difficult nature, and can only be learned by persons of fifteen or sixteen years of age. Those instructions which we cannot acquire but with great application, are unfit for infancy. This is so plain a truth, that it would be absurd to try to convince you of it by reasoning, though it is very frequently lost sight of in almost every plan of education. Is it not usual to set a poor child at six years old to learn lessons of grammar, geometry, astronomy, &c. People take great pains to teach them what they cannot comprehend, and destroy their health, and give them an invincible disgust for study. Can any thing be more ridiculous than to see a child gravely seated before a desk, employed in answering a problem or explaining a system of the world ? In this case, every thing which is required of it will have a contrary effect to what the tutor expects : that is to say, the poor child gains nothing but ignorance and a distaste for labour ; for if she should understand what they had made her repeat, the tender constitution of a child would sink under such an intense application, and thus her untimely knowledge would bring her to the grave. But let us return to my *Adelaide*, from whom these reflections have detained me so long. She learns also to draw,

as it is my particular desire she should excel in this charming qualification, which suits with every age, and which offers so many resources against idleness. *Rousseau* will have *Emilius* learn drawing without a master; I shall take care, says he, to keep him from such a master, as would only give him copies to imitate, and only teach him to draw from designs. *Rousseau* speaks here of what he does not understand. It is absolutely impossible to learn to draw without a master, and that master ought to be a very good one; for every thing depends on first principles. It is not only necessary to have good copies, but the master must understand the science perfectly; for it is by drawing with him, not by advising him, that he can make any rapid progress. It will be necessary to begin with copying: it is true you may lengthen this apprenticeship too much, which would be losing time; but in a year's time a good master will have taught his scholar to draw from nature. These, my dear friend, are part of my sentiments on the manner of teaching children, with regard to their talents for any particular instrument. I think we all have them in an equal degree, unless that the fingers of some persons are formed in an extraordinary manner. It is true a little fat hand will find it difficult to play on instruments which require strength and extension, such as the harp, the lute, and the theorbo; yet with somewhat more application, they may get the better of this difficulty. Why then do you tell me that talents are so rare? It is that children are ill taught; that mothers do not direct their masters, and only give examples of laziness to their children. How can you expect a young person to have a taste for study, or to be anxious to acquire pleasing talents, when she sees

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her

her mother spend half her time at her toilet, and at public places, and the other half in knotting, playing at cards, and receiving visits. You say you never could learn drawing, music, or geography, &c. But did you ever sincerely wish to learn these things? No, surely, you only was inspired with a desire to shine at a ball, and be able to dance elegantly in six months. Had your inclinations been turned on more serious objects, you would have succeeded equally well. The result of what I have said is, that the great point to be obtained in education is not to be in a hurry; to teach children what they can easily comprehend, and never to neglect an opportunity of teaching them every thing within their reach; and at first only to give them examples of morality, not precepts. I have hitherto confined myself to children, so that you are only acquainted with the least interesting part of my plan of education. But when *Adelaide* is twelve years old, you will find my accounts less trifling and insipid.

It remains still that I speak of the management of children with regard to their health. *Rousseau*, with all the attention he pays to that subject, exactly follows the system of Mr. *Locke*; for though he does not quote him, he copies him literally. The wise *Locke* forbids swaddling clothes, or loading children with unnecessary clothes. He advises to accustom them to the open air, and to bathe their feet constantly in cold water. This doctrine, given from motives of benevolence, is so much the more estimable, as the author, with such superior merit, shews no desire of distinguishing himself, but only appears actuated by the wish of being useful. This book, which is translated into all languages, was in every body's hands when *Emilius* appeared, but

had not brought about any change in the systems adopted. Wisdom has less influence than enthusiasm, because it is always simple in its expressions, and scarce ever assumes an imposing or authoritative tone. The English Philosopher seemed only to give his advice. *Rousseau* repeated the same things, but he did not advise, he commanded, and was obeyed. I have observed this method with *Adelaide* from her birth to three years old. She has been constantly washed from head to foot in summer with cold water; and in winter with water luke warm, observing at the same time to rub her with a spunge, to make her sleep in a hard bed without curtains, and to wear only a cap and little gown, with a single blanket in winter, and a sheet in summer. The doors and windows of her chamber were almost always to be open in the day-time, excepting in damp weather, with very little fire in the day, and none in the night. She was continually in the open air, but I was in no hurry to make her walk, thinking it better to stay till her legs were strong enough to bear the weight of her body with ease. I also paid great attention to prevent her getting wet in her feet. As soon as children are weaned, they should drink nothing but water. No thickened milk or cream; she sometimes eats an egg, some cold milk, vegetables, broth, or fruit, &c. But no sweetmeats nor pastry. No whalebone in her stays till she was four years old. At that age she began with very thin and large ones, except in summer, when she had no other dres than her shift, and a gauze or muslin frock; and she never wore stockings or shoes, except in extreme hot weather, when she walked out. People are very apt to find fault

with the custom of putting on stays to children. They are indeed pernicious when they are tight, but when properly made they are far from being hurtful ; the wearing them is equally convenient and healthy. By placing the shoulders in a proper position, they open the chest, support the back, and keep the stomach in a situation proper for digestion. They render falls often less dangerous ; and if they are not made too tight, children feel much more at their ease in them than they do in a waist-coat. It is only the excess of heat that can make them inconvenient, and then it is a cruelty to oblige children to wear them. Adieu, my dear friend ! I make no professions of the sentiments I entertain for you. I think the immoderate length of my letters will convince you of my confidence, and of my tender and lively friendship.

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## LETTER XII.

*The Baroness to the Countess d'Ostalis.*

**I** WRITE to you to-day, my dear child, to find fault with you. I hope this beginning will not frighten you. My reproofs you know are as gentle as your faults are small. Madame *de Linmours* wrote me an account of a family supper at which you was present, and of a certain game at cards, which I confess a little chagrined me. I cannot figure to myself my charming daughter, who is so gentle, so humble, and at the same time so noble, giving herself up to all the extravagance of false mirth, disfiguring her sweet face by noisy and

and affected bursts of laughter, and making those little shrill screams, like *Mademoiselle de Lemy*, and *Mademoiselle de Limours*. Whence proceeded all these effects? Was you really vexed at the run of the cards? If you felt such an emotion, doubtless you ought to have concealed it, for it is absurd and shameful to shew it. Besides, you are no miser, nor ever play high, and it is absolutely indifferent to you whether you win or lose; consequently all those cries and appearances of vexation were only affectation. It is scarce worth while to give up your sweetness of temper, in order to gain the character of a bad player, or of want of judgment. I am sure you could not entertain so foolish an idea for a moment, but to shew your complaisance to the company you played with. But if you encourage this weakness, it will lead you farther than you imagine. When people adopt follies, either from fashion or condescension, they suffer themselves to be hurried away by still more seducing, and dangerous examples. I know the purity of your heart, your docility, and confidence in me; I know the advice of your mother can never be neglected by you, and have no fears of you for the future. Be always indulgent, my child, to those women who are guilty of such meannesses; never appear to blame or ridicule them at any time of your life, but never imitate them!

I have another cause of complaint against you, which I have scarce courage to mention, since it proceeds from your affection to me. But you ought to know I never regard my own interest, where yours is concerned. You think you are with child, and you appear to be afflicted at it,

because it will prevent your seeing me this year. Now as you are not ignorant how much your husband wishes for a son, it is very wrong in you to let him see a concern which can only vex him. When complaint is useless, it only shews weakness; when it gives pain, it is absurd. The ill humour you shew justly displeases your husband, discontents the family, but cannot prevent your remaining at Paris; can add nothing to the idea I ever had of your tenderness, and only lessens the opinion I had of your understanding. So, my dear child, repair this imprudence, and never fall into it again. Adieu, my dear daughter! Write to me always with the same punctuality, and believe that I expect, with as much impatience as you can do, the moment which is to reunite us.

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## LETTER XIII.

*Viscountess to the Baroness.*

YOU have thoroughly explained to me the greatest part of my doubts. All your designs are excellent, and your method of teaching is certainly preferable to the common one. But it is necessary, according to your plan, that mothers should be capable of directing the different masters: where will you find such mothers? Where is the woman who, like you, has passed her life in cultivating her talents for instruction, that she may be useful to her children? Besides, if all mothers thought as you do, there would be an end of all society; shut up in their chambers, with masters instructing them, or flying away to their country-houses,

houses, they would be lost to the world, and Paris would become a desert. I interest myself much in your fame, but I do not wish you to succeed in making this reform. Joking apart, I have a remark to make to you. You prevent your children, till the age of thirteen, from reading Telemachus, Fontaine's Fables, and all such books; yet you would inspire them with a taste for reading! What books then would you give them instead of those I have mentioned? Are they only to read the Arabian Nights, and Fairy Tales, till they are thirteen? Do they learn nothing by heart? I have often heard you say it was impossible to understand the harmony or sounds of Poetry if the ear is not accustomed to it from infancy. Be so good to answer me this. I write to you in great haste, as I am going immediately into the country I am waited for, and hurried. Adieu, my dear friend! Madame *d'Ostalis*' pregnancy is no longer doubted. I saw her husband yesterday, who told me she bears it with the best grace in the world, which was more pleasing to him, as he did not expect it. Farewell, my love. You take no journeys, therefore never write me such vile short letters as this is.

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## LETTER XIV.

*The Baroness to the Viscountess.*

**I** NEITHER give my children Fairy Tales to read, or The Arabian Nights, nor even Madame *d'Auoy*'s Fables, which were composed for this

purpose. There is scarcely one of them which has a moral tendency. Love is the subject in them all. You find a Princess persecuted on account of her beauty. A Prince, handsome as the day, dying for love of her, and a wicked, ugly rival, consumed with envy and jealousy! Tho' the moral of these little stories may be good, children cannot improve by them; and only struck with the wonderful, they will remember nothing but the enchanted gardens and diamond palaces; all these ridiculous ideas give them only false notions, stop the course of their reasoning, and inspire them with a dislike for instructive reading. *Locke* complains that there is not a single work existing proper for infancy; I know not one in the French language, though it would be so useful. The fixing our first principles and turn of mind depends greatly on the impressions we receive in infancy: it is therefore necessary these books should be written with great simplicity; that they should be equally interesting and instructing, and to vary the form of these little histories will also be proper. And I believe, if the subjects were well chosen, and the charms and simplicity of Nature were properly described, it would make such works more valuable than you have any idea of: now, I hear you exclaim, and you repeat twenty times: "Where is a book so useful?" "Where can it be met with?" I will tell you, and will even produce it to you, whenever you chuse to have it. And as there is no great wisdom required in the composition, but only Nature and common sense; I will without evasion tell you I am myself the Author. We call it the "Castle Evening." The subject of it is, a good

mother retired to the castle with her three children, the eldest of whom is only seven years old, and who every evening, if they are very good, tells them a little story. These recitals are often interrupted by the questions of the children, who never let a word pass which they do not understand, without desiring an explanation. You are sensible how clear this method must make it to their comprehensions. It is only one volume, but has five hundred pages. The effect it has already produced on my children, is every thing I could wish. At each story they do not fail to ask me, "if it has really happened!" and when I affirm it to be true, I remark an extraordinary increase of attention and concern, which is a much greater benefit than they could possibly draw from the most moral Fairy Tale. So I engage, if ever I determine on publishing this work, to assure my young Readers, in an advertisement made only for them, that the Author has invented nothing, but that it is scrupulously and exactly true; and with this precaution, I am certain my stories will be read with eagerness, and make a deep impression. With regard to Poetry, I have collected from different Authors, the greater part of which are scarcely known by name, some extracts, which make three volumes, for the use of my children, till they are fourteen or fifteen. This little collection is really very pleasing, and most of the pieces are truly moral. But to return to prose; *Adelaide* will read nothing but my tales till she is seven years old; I shall then give her the "Conversations of Emily," a book you have often heard me praise. And this will employ her till she is eight. At which time you shall know the

rest of my plan. You say, my dear friend, " if all  
" mothers were like me, Paris would become a de-  
" fart ! " In the first place, remember I only quitted  
it at the age of thirty two, and in four years I  
mean to return to it again. Besides, it is pos-  
sible, without quitting the world at all, to be as  
useful to your children as I have been to mine,  
whatever you may say of it. Far from passing all  
my time in my closet, I was fifteen years in the  
world, and I should be very sorry not to have  
lived in it. For no person, who has not a thorough  
knowledge of it, is capable of educating her chil-  
dren properly. It was in the world I conceived  
this mode of education, which I now put in prac-  
tice ; and it was there, I composed these Works  
relative to it. If my labours have been useful,  
and my method should be adopted, I shall at least  
have spared to others the reflection, study, and  
trouble, which it cost me for twelve years.

I cannot finish this letter without telling you  
a pretty little story, which will entertain and in-  
terest you, *Adelaide* being the heroine of it.  
The day before yesterday, she asked my leave to  
take a walk in the fields, with *Miss Bridget*. I  
consented, and they set out at eight in the morn-  
ing, with orders to return at ten : but they did  
not come back till half an hour past eleven. I  
was going to find fault, when *Adelaide*, blushing,  
and quite out of breath, begged *Miss Bridget* to  
allow her to tell me the story ; and then gave me  
the following interesting recital : About half a  
league from B——, they observed a young female  
peasant seated on the grass, with an infant in her  
arms. Struck with the paleness and pretty figure  
of the woman, they went up to her, and learnt  
that

that she was just come from the neighbouring village, where she had been to buy some provisions, and that fatigue had obliged her to sit down. She added, with a moving air, continued *Adelaide*, that what gave her most uneasiness was, that her mother was ill, and would be unhappy at her staying; and saying this, “the young woman wept, and kissed her little crying baby!” *Adelaide*, without hesitation, begged Miss *Bridget* to let her and the child get into the carriage, which followed them, and carry them home. Miss *Bridget* consented. The young woman told them the way, and in less than half an hour they arrived “at the prettiest cottage imaginable,” where they found “two charming little girls, who “threw themselves on the young woman’s neck “to embrace her,” and “their grandmother appears so good and so old, that indeed my dear “mamma, you must see them.” Miss *Bridget* added more particulars to this recital; all to the praise of *Adelaide*’s sensibility. The same evening the young peasant’s husband came to the castle to return thanks to *Adelaide*; and the next day we all went to see these good people, who are truly interesting by the extreme harmony which subsists among them. They are poor, but industrious, and appear satisfied with their condition. After making all possible inquiries into their characters and conduct, we have this morning determined to purchase for them a small piece of ground of about six acres, which was to be sold near their cottage; we shall also give them a cow or two; some poultry, clothes, linen, and some furniture.

You

You cannot form to youself any idea of *Adelaide's* joy and transport on this determination. I have sent this evening for two sempstresses, to make clothes for the young peasant and her children; and *Adelaide* will herself assist in making them. Her play-things and her doll are thrown aside, and I see, with inexpressible delight, that in a heart uncorrupted, the pleasure preferred before all others, is that of doing good, and contributing to perform a virtuous and generous action. Adieu, my dear friend! I hope your next letter will make me amends for your laſt, which was indeed very ſhort.

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## LETTER. XV.

*The same to the same.*

**W**E had yeſterday a charming ride. We carried to *Nicole* the young peasant I mentioned to you, all the furniture, clothes, &c. we intended them; *Adelaide* was loaded with a bundle of childrens' cloathing; which, notwithstanding the extreme heat of the weather, ſhe kept holding on her lap, the whole time we were in the carriage. She arrived at the cottage in a violent perspiration, her little heart beating, ſo that you could ſee its motion. Her cheeks flushed, and the pureſt and most lively joy ſparkling in her eyes! Delightful, happy age, when every gesture, every action, preſents an innocent and faithful picture of the ſentiments of the heart! By degrees, as we lose this amiable ſimplicity, the ſilent, but interesting language of the eyes, becomes leſs intelligible; but they

they cannot quite deceive till the heart is wholly corrupted ; for it is much more criminal to deceive by looks, than even by words. For he who cannot tell a falsehood without blushing, is not yet a complete liar, and whilst we preserve any traces of this sincerity, we are not arrived at the highest pitch of this odious vice. But to return to *Adelaide*. On getting out of the coach, she ran from us, dragging after her, in the dirt, the heavy parcel she had not strength to carry ; and when we entered the cottage, we found her already employed in undressing one of the little girls, to put on a new gown, repeating every moment, “ It was I that made this hem ; ” “ I sewed on this ribbon, ” “ and fastened on this clasp, ” &c. &c. If this little picture affects you, how much more pleasure would you have felt, on seeing the satisfaction of the young peasant and her family. I have never till now found in this class of people any thing more than that kind of gratitude, which does honour to human nature. Hearts uncorrupted as theirs are, are affected with the benefit we confer on them, but are not surprised at it ; while the extreme astonishment we shew at a good action, is a silent confession that we are incapable of doing it ! Adieu, my dear friend ! I quit you to go and read with *Adelaide*, who at this moment is leaning on my chair, and begging me to give her a lesson.

My sweet *Adelaide* has done so pretty an action, I cannot help telling it to you. And I have opened my letter again on purpose. After our reading, we went to take a walk, and amongst the chesnut trees, found a little bird just ready to fly ; we took it up, and *Adelaide*, transported with joy, carried

it

it to my chamber, and put it into a cage, every moment taking it out, and stifling it with caresses, and then crying over it as if it was dead. Here begins our dialogue word for word :

*Adelaide.* Mamma, my bird is hungry. I (writing at my desk) replied, " give it something to eat then ; you have got what is necessary."

*Adelaide.* But he will not eat.

*Answer.* It is because he is sad.

*Adelaide.* Why is he sad ?

*Answer.* Because he is unhappy.

*Adelaide.* Unhappy ! Oh Heaven, why is my sweet little bird unhappy ?

*Answer.* Because you do not know how to take care of him, and feed him, and because he is in prison.

*Adelaide.* In prison !

*Answer.* Yes, certainly he is : attend to me,

*Adelaide.* If I was to shut you up in a little room, and not permit you to go out of it, would you be happy ?

*Adelaide.* (Her heart full) Oh my poor little bird !

*Answer.* You make him unhappy.

*Adelaide.* (Frighten'd) I make him unhappy !

*Answer.* This little bird was in the fields, at his liberty, and you shut him up in a little cage, where he is not able to fly : see how he beats against it ; if he could cry, I am sure he would.

*Adelaide.* (Taking him out of the cage) Mamma, I am going to set him at liberty ; the window is open, is it not ?

*Answer.* As you please, my dear child ; for my part, I never would keep birds ; for I would have

have every thing about me, and all that comes near me, happy !

*Adelaide.* I would be as good as my dear mamma. I am going to put it on the balcony, shall I ?

*Answer.* (I still writing) If you please, my little dear.

*Adelaide.* But first I will feed him. Oh, my dear mamma, he eats !

*Answer.* I am very glad of it, if it gives you pleasure.

*Adelaide.* He eats. I know how to feed him. Sweet bird ! Charming little creature ! (she kisses him) How pretty he is. Ah, he kisses me. How I love him. (She puts him into the cage again, then is thoughtful, and sighs. After some silence, the bird begins to beat himself again) I (looking compassionately at him) say, " Poor " little unfortunate ! "

*Adelaide.* (With tears in her eyes) Oh, mamma ! (taking him again out of the cage) I will give him his liberty ; shall I ?

*Answer.* (Without looking at her) As you please, *Adelaide.*

*Adelaide.* (Going to the window) Dear little one ! (she returns, crying) " Mamma, I cannot ! "

*Answer.* Well, my dear, keep it then : this bird, like other animals, has not reason enough to reflect on the species of cruelty you have, in depriving him of his happiness, to procure yourself a trifling amusement. He will not hate you, but he will suffer ; and he would be happy, if he was at liberty. I would not hurt the smallest insect, at least not maliciously.

*Adelaide.*

*Adelaide.* Come, then, I am going to put it on the window.

*Answer.* You are at liberty to do as you please, my dear, but do not interrupt me any more; let me write.

*Adelaide.* (Kissing me, then going to the cage) Dear, dear bird! (She weeps, and after a little reflection, she goes to the window, and returns with precipitation, her cheeks glowing, but with tears in her eyes) says, "Mamma, it is done; " I have set him at liberty!"

*Answer.* I (taking her in my arms) say, my charming *Adelaide*, you have done a "good "action," and I love you a thousand times more than ever.

*Adelaide.* Oh then I am well rewarded!

*Answer.* You always will be, every time you have courage to make a real sacrifice. Besides, sacrifices of this kind are only painful in idea. They are no sooner done, but they render us so amiable, that they leave nothing but joy and satisfaction in our hearts: for example, you wept at the thoughts of setting your bird at liberty; but do you regret it now?

*Adelaide.* Oh, no mamma; on the contrary, I am charmed at having made him happy, and at having performed a "good action."

*Answer.* Well, my dear child, never forget that, and if you are under any difficulty, in determining "to do right," remember your little bird, and say to yourself, There are no sacrifices, for which the esteem and tenderness for those we love cannot make useful amends.

## LETTER XVI.

*Baron d'Almame to the Viscount Limours.*

NO, my dear Viscount, I do not at all repent the part I have taken, nor do I for one moment regret the pleasures of Paris, or the intrigues of the Court! If you knew with what an eye we consider these things at this distance, and how trifling and frivolous they appear, when they are coolly considered, you would the more readily believe me. I am however far from thinking that happiness consists only in solitude. It is certainly incompatible with vice and wickedness. But, otherwise, it is derived from various contrary causes. Wisdom and enthusiasm both equally serve to procure it; and reason and virtue will always maintain a right to create it, in every place and situation; in the midst of the tumult of Courts, as well in a cloyster, or a desart. And old people, men of the world, or those retired from it, may, by being just and good, enjoy that desired comfort, which the designing wicked man can never know! Believe me, my friend, our passions can never procure it for us. I have felt their influence, have known all the illusions of love; but in this tumultuous state the soul is agitated above its powers, and seems rather to be exhausted than satisfied, by what it experiences. These delights and transports, which almost deprive us of our reason, undoubtedly form a situation too active and violent for our weak minds; and become painful to us by their excess.

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If you had not told me, my dear Viscount, a thousand times, that you had spent your life in studying different opinions, without ever adopting one, I should have been convinced of it by your last letter. You shew me in that all the advantages you have received from a good education; but you evidently prove, that you have not sufficiently reflected or meditated on that important subject, since, often praising my intentions and plans, you end all on a sudden with asking me this question: "Do you really think that education can extirpate our vices, or endue us with virtues; and that it is of any use to us?" I have certainly given testimony that I think so, by the sacrifices I have made in order to educate my children. But above all things consult History, and that will prove to you, that education not only improves a virtuous mind, but that (without finding even the seeds of them in our hearts) it can inspire us with the most violent passions. It was education that made such extraordinary men of the Lacedæmonians. It was that, whose prevailing power was able to tear from their hearts the most tender and gentle sentiments, and to substitute those less natural passions in their stead. In short, it was education alone which could render their country dearer to them than their wives and children. Reflect how deeply engraved on our hearts are the first impressions we receive in our infancy and earliest youth. If reason, and the improvement of the understanding, has not power totally to destroy the most absurd prejudices received in infancy, how solid and lasting will be those principles which are founded on truth, and which every reflection will more and more strengthen.

strengthen. The essential point is, to know exactly the principles which ought first to be engraved on the minds of children, and I think we should begin by inspiring them with a contempt for every person who has not courage to execute a resolution seriously taken. Teach them then that it is not only necessary to be religious observers of their word with others, but that it is almost equally shameful to fail in those engagements they make with themselves. Weakness has a thousand times more inconvenience than obstinacy. We may esteem an obstinate man, but it is impossible not to despise a weak one. - If you do not give your pupil strength of mind to conquer himself, every thing else you teach him will be useless; and the first six months he is absent from you, perhaps will obliterate for ever all the advantages you expected from eighteen years labour and attention. But you will ask, is this empire over one's self to be acquired? Yes, undoubtedly, and more easily than any other virtue; for it requires nothing more than habit. Accustom your pupil never to promise any thing slightly; but to keep punctually the slightest engagements, encourage him to it by little rewards, which by degrees you may increase as you see him improve in his resolution. But if he should fail to keep his word, you must express as much surprize as indignation; and tell him, if he was not a child, he would be dishonoured by such an action: make him feel how contemptible he must appear, and constantly add punishment to these humiliations, which at each return of his fault should be encreased: give him an example of what you expect from him, that your slightest promise should be inviolable and sacred;

sacred; and lastly, when he convinces you he has gained power over himself, praise him only moderately; for nothing is more dangerous than to extol too much an action which it is our duty to perform. In shewing any admiration of it, we almost dispense with the performance of it on any other occasion. When *Theodore* shews me his firmness and resolution, I put on an air of the greatest satisfaction; for the other virtues that appear in him, I seem to regard him with more tenderness; but for this alone I appear to look on him no longer as a child. I reward him by an appearance of respect and consideration. I entrust him with a secret. I accustom him to feel all the pleasures of being esteemed. And I make him comprehend that the advantages they ensure to us are greater than those of even friendship itself. *Theodore*, like many other children, is naturally very greedy. Madame *d'Almane* the other day gave some sweetmeats to her little girl. *Theodore* also wanted some; I told him I could not give him any, as he did not deserve them so well as his sister, because he would eat them all in a quarter of an hour. But if he would promise to keep them, as *Adelaide* did, for several days, and to reflect deliberately on the promise he was going to make, and could assure me, after having considered of it, that he was capable of making this trial, I would rely upon him, and give him the sweetmeats. That very day, at dinner, *Theodore* requested leave to take a *burnt almond*, which is one of the sweet things he loves best; and instead of eating it, he wrapt it up in a paper very seriously, and put it in his pocket. At night, after supper, he approached me with inexpressible pride,

and

and produced his *burnt almond*, telling me, “it was yet untouched.” At the same moment, I looked out for a pretty little box made for sweet-meats, into which I put twelve perfumed lozenges, and gave it to *Theodore*; at the same time requesting him to promise me not to eat more than three a day, which he has performed with the strictest fidelity. This example alone will give you an idea of the methods which may be taken to set children on their guard against their passions, and to put them also in a way to triumph over them. The success of these expedients, if often repeated, is infallible.

You ask me, if I teach my boy Latin? I think the knowledge of this language is useful, though not so indispensably necessary as it was five hundred years ago. They could not then have any idea of sciences of any kind, but by learning Greek and Latin. But at present, those who understand French, English, and Italian perfectly, have the opportunity of reading a great many works, at least equal to, if not superior to those which antiquity has produced. Milton, Tasso, and Ariosto, united together, may perhaps rival Homer and Virgil. And surely Corneille, Racine, Voltaire, Crebillon, Shakespeare, &c. have produced as many excellent Pieces as Sophocles and Euripides; Moliere has surpassed Plautus and Terence. Are the Fables of Phædrus better than those of Fontaine? The Poems of Boileau, of John Baptist Rousseau, Gessert, Voltaire, Madame des Houlieres, Pope, Swift, Prior, and Thomson; are they inferior to those of Tibullus, Catullus, and Ovid? The Philosophical Works of Cicero, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and Epictetus, contain in general the most sublime

sublime sentiments, which we cannot too much admire. But have the Writings of Fenelon, Montesquieu, Addison, &c. less eloquence or learning? With respect to Sciences, the comparison would be still more advantageous to the Moderns. I could mention several living Authors as illustrious as those I have now quoted, but this dissertation is already too long. To return therefore to my son; I intend certainly to teach him Latin. It is true, I shall not begin it till he is twelve or thirteen years old. Till then the study of it would only serve to make him weary, and when his understanding is a little enlarged, he will learn easily, and with little trouble, in eighteen months, what we could not expect to teach him in six years, by means of threats or punishments. For the present, I confine myself to the teaching him living languages by practice. He already speaks English perfectly well, and can call for every necessary in German. He has a Saxon footman, who never speaks to him in French. He will understand as much of German as is necessary for a soldier. The German literature has only been truly interesting for these forty years past. The modern Authors, Klopstock, Haller, Gesner, Gellert, &c. have enriched it with Works which will make it immortal. But as it is not a language very general, and as it is scarcely possible to understand more than two or three languages besides our own, I have given the preference to English and Italian, which my children will begin to learn in six months, and in five years they will be able to read these languages with as much ease as French.

Farewell, my dear Viscount! You desire me to give you an account of my avocations: let me in return

return, hear of your amusements, and every thing that interests you, and send me word if you have really quarrelled in earnest with Madame *de Gerville*? You know I shall not be sorry for it, as I can never forgive her the vexation she has given your wife.

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## LETTER XVII.

*Viscount to the Baron d'Almane.*

I Repeat to you, my dear Baron, your plan of education appears to me most excellent, and, notwithstanding the fickleness of opinion with which you accuse me, I believe I shall always continue to think so. From all that you have said in your former letter, I am perfectly satisfied, if your son has sense and genius, that you will make a great man of him. However, permit me to tell you, I think I have remarked some contradictions in your principles. You are convinced that happiness consists only in being of a quiet, peaceful mind. And that strong passions, even when gratified, will not procure it; and yet, notwithstanding, this is your opinion. All your attentions and labours not only serve to exalt and elevate the mind of your pupil, but also warm his imagination, and kindle the fire of heroism in his heart. No doubt you will succeed, but would it not be better to make a happy than a great man? Can it be vanity which makes you prefer shining and dangerous qualifications to the more retired and milder virtues, which would ensure the repose and happiness

of his life? I can scarcely believe it. And you must explain to me what I have so badly understood, or what you have not sufficiently informed me of. Your first duty and sole end is to labour for the happiness of your child. He has already obtained from nature and fortune every advantage which they can procure him; but your care and reflections will add to them all that he has a right to expect from a father, who has sacrificed every thing for his improvement.

You want to know if I have really broke off my connections with Madame *de Gerville*. I hope so, but . . . . However, I cannot answer for it. She was insupportable to me, and for a long time we have found out we did not love each other. Nay, we have even discovered that we never loved. But her talents for intrigue were sometimes useful to me; and as our dispute has produced a bad effect to her, by making her lose what little consideration she possessed, I imagine she already begins to wish for a reconciliation; in which case I am sure I cannot help agreeing to it, at least in appearance. I have met with her these two days past, at a house where we visited; she played her part so well, and shewed such emotion at seeing me, that every body was duped by it except myself. But you will allow that it is necessary to submit to these indirect advances if she repeats them. One thing alone would make me hesitate; it is the certainty of giving great pain to Madame *de Limours*; for if I may judge by the joy she expressed at our quarrel, which she did not hear till the day before yesterday, I should imagine she was jealous. But why should she? Has she an right to be so, considering the manner in which

we have always lived together? I am as well convinced as you can be of the perfect chastity of Madame *de Limours*, but you know with what indifference she has always treated me. I am not ignorant that women often give themselves up to jealousy without feeling any tender sentiments; but it is not allowable for us to indulge them in such a caprice.

Farewell, my dear Baron; write to me as often as you can. Be assured, all those pleasures which you have given up, and which still remains to me, are not so estimable as your correspondence.

### LETTER XVIII.

*Answer from the Baron d'Almane, to the Viscount Limours.*

YES, my dear friend, my son's happiness is the chief duty, and sole end of my life; this dear, and sacred interest, is the only one which animates me. I am going to satisfy your friendship, and I hope clear up your doubts. I am persuaded that a reserved man, who is confined in his ideas, can never be perfectly happy. He is not to be pitied, because he has no idea of a greater degree of happiness. But it is not less true, that the situation is like that of a mere vegetable, uniform and tiresome: he is deprived of those lively and numerous pleasures, which are reserved for men of superior talents. It is much less owing to our senses that we are happy, than to our ideas and reflections. During our sleep, dreams have a natural power over our minds to affect us as much, or more, than even

reality can do. But observe, it is terror in particular which makes the strongest impressions, because the stupification we are under makes us still more susceptible; and pleasing dreams make only a trifling impression on our minds. Your dreams have a thousand times represented to you enchanted palaces, and hidden treasures, &c. &c. Did those things overjoy you, or did they ever give you the pleasure you feel at the first scene of an opera? No, surely; and why? Because your imagination is without activity, and you have neither understanding, nor the power of reflection. We say every day, "Happiness is mere matter of opinion, and he who thinks himself happy, is really so." The Savage, reduced to live in a desert without society, pleasures, or ideas, is then as happy as the enlightened Sage; whose life is made pleasing to him by study, by friendship, and by benevolence! It would be absurd to believe or to support such an argument. Happiness, as I have said before, is offered to every honest and reasonable being; but the perfect degree of it is only reserved for a very small number of men, and even for those few is very difficult to be found. There is only one path which leads to it, and the variety of opinions, prejudices, and false systems generally conduct us to a contrary road: without ardour, and without activity, we cannot arrive at it. The Philosopher in his retreat, undeceived and out of conceit with every thing, is only happy by these two principles. He reflects deeply, and his thoughts are constantly employed; wisdom has subdued his passions, but has not weakened his sensibility. If he had never experienced those passions which he has learned to conquer; or if

his mind had been deprived of that degree of energy which made him susceptible, he would have had but an imperfect knowledge of the human heart. He would not taste the sweetest of all pleasures, that which peace and rest offer us, after a glorious and obstinate contest. In fine, he will be neither a Sage nor a Philosopher, nor perfectly happy. This is the state of happiness which I have conceived, when after an impetuous youth, after having experienced all the transports which glory, ambition, and love can inspire, one finds at length, time and age moderating this eager enthusiasm of a young, ardent, and sensible heart; and enjoys with satisfaction the tranquility which succeeds such agitation. It is thus, that the eager traveller leaves his own country, either through interest or curiosity; crosses rocks, and encounters dangers; fatigues, amuses, and instructs himself; and finds his courage strengthened, as he surveys with delight countries so new to him. In the end, when he returns back, he blesses the day which has brought him home. He finds an inexpressible pleasure in relating the history of his long journeys; he is charmed with the remembrance of them, but he does not wish to renew them. One must be possessed of a virtuous mind, to find, after moderating the passions, that peace so precious and so dear. He who suffers himself to be led into real crimes, has no right to expect it. His exhausted and degraded mind will never know any thing but remorse. Inaccessible to soft emotions, to the tender sentiments of humanity, he will in vain lament the loss of his pleasures; nothing will make him amends for them, and he will become a Misanthrope. His hatred and animosity will be

extended over all nature ; and, consumed with regret, disgust, and despair, he perhaps shortens the term of his deplorable life. But you will say, Is it not possible to have strong and lively passions, without their leading us astray ? Yes, certainly ; and this is the work of a good education, a work which consists in teaching your scholar to gain an empire over himself, and to inspire him with a desire to make himself distinguished, and with the love of glory. If these ideas are strongly engraved in a young and sensible mind, they will lay a foundation for his future conduct. Love, far from disgracing him, will only exalt his sentiments, and add to his delicacy. Ambition will never suffer him to be guilty of an unworthy action. Eager to make his name illustrious, and looking on the whole world as his judge, he will readily sacrifice, if necessary, his inclinations and his pleasures to the ruling desire of deserving and obtaining a dazzling and shining reputation. Perhaps at first he may only be virtuous by system, or by vanity, but in the end he will practice virtue by custom and inclination. In the present system, all these ideas are confounded together. Have you not seen persons at Court styled ambitious, who are only guided by the meanest and vilest interest ? Avarice and lust are the secret and shameful alternatives, by which a part of our people of rank are guided. True ambition makes Heroes and great men : she despises riches, and disdains even honours, if they are not the reward of meritorious actions. She labours for glory for the sake of posterity, and in an age where virtue is no longer loved for its own sake, she leads to those astonishing sacrifices, those unheard-of actions, which History records, never

never to be forgotten. Thus then, if you would have your scholar make a distinguished figure in the world ; "you must warm his imagination and "elevate his mind." But if he is confined in his ideas, if he is of a gloomy, savage, or capricious temper, you must avoid this mode of education, which will either make him a fool or a brute. For example, the education of the last Czar, which only consisted in inspiring him with military ideas, might have made a Conqueror as well as a Sovereign of him, had he been born with sense and courage ; whereas it only now served to make him more foolish and ridiculous. Charles the XIIth. that glorious King of Sweden, whose valour rendered even his follies glorious, should have possessed less ardour, or more genius. If he had had less enthusiasm, his name might not have been so celebrated, but would have been more truly great. It is necessary then, if I may so speak, to "adapt the education" of your pupil to his character and disposition ; attending only to soften his manners, and to keep his mind calm and tranquil, if he has but a moderate share of understanding ; and to raise and elevate his mind, in proportion to the merit and talents you perceive in him. This is the difficult and delicate point on which all depends, and which requires the greatest discernment and constant attention. He may easily become a great man, without being endowed with superior sense and genius, provided he has courage, an elevated mind, and a sound judgement. I will explain to you in my next, the manner in which you ought to study the disposition of a child ; and at what age you may begin to judge what he will be afterwards. I perceive with great con-

cern, my dear Viscount, you are going to renew your connection with Madame *de Gerville*; you are sensible your wife will be truly afflicted at this news, yet you cannot sacrifice to her a friendship already broken, and which is so little necessary to the happiness of your life. Thus it is, that custom has as much power over you, as the most violent passions can have. How necessary then is it, that we should only follow those which are good! Adieu, my dear Viscount! I will not allow myself to make any more reflections at present, for I perceive they will only be at your expence.

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## LETTER XIX.

*From the same to the same.*

YOUR last letter has so entirely put an end to the fears I had of wearying you with so many particulars relative to education, that I shall make no more apologies on the subject. I have already shewn you, of what importance it is to have a perfect knowledge of the temper, inclinations, and extent of the understanding of your scholar, so as to correct the defects he may have received from Nature, and to be in a state as much as possible to foresee to what degree of merit he may arrive: and now I am going to point out the means, by which you may acquire this knowledge. It is necessary to attend to the child's disposition, from the time he can speak. If he shews no attachment to those who have the care of him, he will afford you very few motives for hope.

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But we may expect a great deal from a child, who expresses sensibility, and a lively taste for the amusements procured him: follow him in his sports, and be assured, if he pursues them eagerly, and does not soon grow tired with them, that you will one day or other find him capable of great application; and you may easily give him an inclination for study. When he is five years old, often converse with him, not to instruct him, but to make yourself acquainted with his disposition. But take care he does not suspect your intentions; for then he will not answer ingenuously the questions you put to him. Seem only to talk for the sake of talking, and do not appear to pay any great attention to what he says, and notwithstanding his childishness, you will easily discover whether his ideas are at all arranged, and if he has strength of judgment. In fine, as *Montaigne* says, speaking of a Tutor:

“ I would not have him the only talker; his  
“ scholar should speak in his turn. It is necessary  
“ to make him trot, before that the Tutor may  
“ judge of his pace.”

I scarcely ever saw a child born with any sense, that is not pleased with comparing new objects with those he is already acquainted with: however trifling these comparisons may be, if they are just, they will infallibly prove, he has taste and judgment. Children are naturally talkative, which foible, according to the manner in which it shews itself, proves either that they have sense, or that they want it. A child, who cannot even by fear be kept from talking, but will converse with every body, without distinction, and never waits to be answered, will probably one day be mean and im-

portunate. But he, who only speaks to those he is acquainted with, and is silent before strangers ; prattling only to his relations and friends, and at the same time takes great pleasure in listening to others ; this child will certainly have good sense. In short, I am of opinion, that after having made these observations, if one has never quitted the child, or if the discovery of the child's reason has not been delayed by illness, or by the weakness of his constitution, we may at six or seven years old begin to form a certain judgment of his temper and disposition. *Rousseau* has said with great eloquence, "that a man born naturally good, if he is left to himself, will always remain so." I am not of this opinion. A man left to himself will naturally be revengeful, and consequently, will neither possess greatness of mind, nor generosity. *Montaigne*'s sentiments are very different from *Rousseau*'s, when he says, "Nature has, I fear, attached some instinct of inhumanity to man ; no one takes pleasure in seeing beasts playing with, and caressing each other ; no one therefore should take any, in seeing them tear each other to pieces." But this is not because men are cruel, but because they are compassionate : they want to be moved, and to escape from idleness, they seek for violent agitations. This is the reason people frequent public executions, and go to see Tragedies : were we insensible, we should not go to either. Man is born with defects and vices, but he is born with sensibility ; and if Nature seldom forms a tender or compassionate heart, at least, it does not produce one which is absolutely without pity. There is no example of a child having a new nurse, who does not sensibly regret and

and weep for the first: therefore if the seeds of sensibility are to be found in mankind, and they become afterwards obdurate and cruel, without any particular vice either of head or heart, it is evident that this unfortunate person has been corrupted by education. In fine, it is a comfortable reflection for all Tutors, that all the bad qualities children shew in their infancy, may be of no bad consequence in future, because a good education may mend them. Whilst on the contrary, for the same reason, we may place firm dependance on the virtues they promise.

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## LETTER XX.

*From the Baron d'Almane to the Viscount Limours.*

YOU ask me, my dear Viscount, how I shall proceed in order to give my son that true courage, which is so essential a quality in men, and above all in a soldier? Custom familiarizes one to the most frightful and dangerous things. If the use of fire was unknown to us the first time we saw it, to what a degree should we be alarmed by its destructive qualities, when we found a single spark sufficient to destroy a whole town! What precautions should we make use of to preserve ourselves in our houses, and what terror would a firebrand falling on the floor, or a lighted candle on a table covered with papers, cause in us! We feel nothing of this, however, because custom has inured us to it; though we are not so indifferent about things

of infinitely less consequence. For example, the generality of women have an invincible aversion to spiders, toads, snakes, &c. whilst the sight of these creatures make no kind of impression on the mind of the most timid peasant, because they meet with such things continually. The country, where people are least afraid of thunder, is precisely that, where it does most mischief. I remember, in going from Rome to Naples, I slept in a Convent, on which the thunder falls regularly two or three times a year. That very night there was a dreadful storm, and I observed the Monks paid no more attention to it than if they had not heard it. I saw all the environs of Mount Vesuvius stripped of their verdure, and covered with lava; frightful and memorable remains of this most dreadful of plagues! Yet on this very lava, I saw a number of houses built, even at the foot of the mountain, and touching that formidable place, which carries death in its bosom. The owners of these lands trample under their feet the ashes of the unfortunate inhabitants of Pompeia. They have before their eyes the ruins of this buried city, and yet they are themselves much nearer to Vesuvius. After all these reflections, I have endeavoured, as much as possible, to familiarize my children to those things which create terror and disgust. In their infancy we accustomed them to look at, and even to touch spiders, frogs, and mice. It was only necessary to set them the example; they soon wished to have them, and to bring them up; and I have seen *Adelaide* weep at the death of her favourite frog, with as much grief as if she had lost the most delightful Canary-bird. When it has thundered, every body near them has cried out,

out, what a beautiful sight! looking at the clouds, and the lightning. And the children used to go, and sit at the windows, to contemplate this "beautiful and sublime sight; and " were much pleased with it." Since I came hither, I have placed in a gallery, through which *Adelaide* and *Theodore* pass, a glass-case, in which is placed a skeleton, and some other anatomical preparations. But I did not let them see this without preparing them for it. I thought it necessary to prevent their being terrified, as a bad impression is very difficult to destroy: this was the method I made use of; one day at dinner, I said aloud, that I had been putting in order the different pieces of anatomy, which had been sent to me from Paris. Monsieur *d'Aimeri* (who had received his instructions) immediately began telling us, that the study of anatomy was very interesting and curious; and added, that he had such a passion for this science, that he had had for two years his "bed-chamber entirely filled with "skeletons." The children enquired what they were, and after we had explained this to them, *Adelaide* said, a skeleton must be a very frightful thing: "not more so than a thousand other things," replied Madame *d'Almane*: "For instance, the "China-baboon you have in your closet;" we then dropped the subject. After dinner I was asked to shew my glass-case; we went into the gallery, and the children came of their own accord, and neither shewed surprize nor disgust at seeing the skeleton: and from this time they have continually passed through the gallery, without even imagining it possible to be afraid of a skeleton. I frequently tell them stories of travel-

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lers, for which children have a particular liking ; and I give them the most superb description of tempests, in order to excite their curiosity, more than their fears. I add, that even shipwrecks are not truly dangerous to those who can swim. And *Theodore* says, he will learn to swim, and that he shall be very sorry, when he takes a voyage, not to see a tempest. It is impossible to conceal from children the dangers which surround mankind, in every action of their lives. Falsehood can never be of any use ; for if your pupil once discovers, that you have concealed the truth from him, you lose his confidence for ever. I would have my son know, that he may be drowned in the sea, killed in battle, &c. &c. But I would not have him look upon danger with the exaggeration which fear, and an astonished apprehension give it : when one does not see the danger greater than it really is, one finds resources in one's own mind to draw one out of it. Every man, whose education has not spoiled him, has this kind of courage, which he receives with his breath, as a necessary instinct for his preservation. The coward, who loses his senses on the appearance of danger, is only a being corrupted and degraded. Nature will bestow on your pupil all that courage and presence of mind, which will be necessary for him to defend himself with, when attacked. Be it your part, to inspire him with generous sentiments, and he will defend his equal ; give him a sense of honour, and he will defend his country. *Locke* and *Rousseau*, have both said, " that you " should never pity children when they fall down or " hurt themselves." In my opinion, this method should only be pursued till they are three or four years

years old, at which time they require soothing, and without which you run the risk of hardening their hearts. I think therefore, when they suffer by any misfortune or accident, they ought to be pitied, especially if they do not complain: but if they scream and cry violently, I would appear to disregard them, and let them see, that your contempt stifles your compassion. As in every thing else, so it is in this. You yourself must set the example. If you cannot suffer pain or illness without complaining every moment; all you can say about fortitude and courage will make little impression. Madame *d'Almane*, four days ago, gave her children a lesson on this subject, which was of more use than all the sermons in the world. You love Madame *d'Almane* for that extreme tenderness she shews for her children; therefore I shall omit none of the particulars of the scene I am going to recite, which was really as alarming as it was interesting. Monsieur *d'Aimeri*, Madame *de Valmont*, and her son were with us. After dinner, we were all in the saloon; Madame *d'Almane*, seated by Madame *Valmont* on a sopha, held *Adelaide* in her lap. When *Theodore*, willing to receive some of his mother's caresses, went softly behind her, and hastily seized one of her arms, which he drew towards him; at that moment a stream of blood ran from her arm, and covered *Adelaide*'s face and her frock, who as soon as she saw it, screamed dreadfully, and fainted away on her mother's bosom; poor *Theodore*, drowned in tears, threw himself on his knees. We all ran to Madame *d'Almane*, who cried out, "*Adelaide!* *Adelaide!* It is she who wants assistance;" and refused to give me her arm, wildly repeating the name

name of “*Adelaide!*” The truth was, she had been blooded that morning, without telling any body of it. And *Theodore*, by seizing and stretching out her arm, had untied the bandage, which occasioned this accident. Madame *de Valmont*, took care of *Adelaide*, whilst Monsieur *d'Aimeri*, and I, fastened the bandage on Madame *d'Almane*'s arm; though not without difficulty, as she had lost her senses, was pale, and trembling; agitated with the most frightful convulsive motions, had her eyes fixed on her daughter, and neither regarded our attentions nor poor *Theodore*, who stood sobbing at her feet. At length, *Adelaide* recovered her senses, opened her eyes, and called to her mother, who flew immediately to her, took her in her arms, and embraced her a thousand times, shedding a flood of tears. We surrounded them, and listened to their conversation with as much emotion as pleasure. When suddenly, observing *Theodore* was not amongst us, I turned my head, and saw him standing by himself in the place his mother had just quitted; no longer on his knees, or in tears, but fixed immoveably, his eyes dry, and having a countenance on which embarrassment, sorrow, and vexation, were equally painted. His heart, till then, so calm and innocent, received, at that moment, the first, the fatal impressions of envy and jealousy. He was no longer the same person. Injustice, perhaps dissimulation and hatred, had just entered into his mind, and had they not been quickly banished, they would have taken the deepest root there. I lost not a moment in making Madame *d'Almane* acquainted with my apprehensions; she immediately begged all the company to leave her; then approaching

proaching *Theodore*, without seeming to observe his trouble and confusion, she embraced him tenderly, and made him sit down by her, taking both her childrens' hands, and addressing herself to me: is it not true, said she, that I am a happy mother, and much beloved? My poor *Theodore*, what has he not suffered! But resume your gaiety, my love, added she, kissing him, your mother and sister are now perfectly recovered. At these words, *Theodore*, still sorrowful, though softened, leaned on his mother's shoulder, looked at his sister with tears in his eyes, and immediately kissed her, but sighed deeply at the same time; and you, my dear girl, continued Madame *d'Almane*, I hope when you are older, (a year hence, perhaps) you will be able, like your brother, to unite courage with sensibility. Here *Theodore* raised his head, as if endeavouring to find out whether she was in earnest. He then embraced her, and redoubled his tears. It is true, said I, women have long been reproached for their aptness to faint, and not without reason, as it is a proof of weakness. But, papa, it is because I love my mamma, said *Adelaide*, with much chagrin. I love you, my mamma, interrupted I, as much as you can do; and so does *Theodore*, yet we neither of us fainted. As I finished these words, *Theodore* threw himself on his sister's neck, crying, "Oh, papa! how you grieve her!" At that moment Madame *d'Almane* looked at me, and gave me her hand, which I bathed with the sweetest tears I ever shed in my life. When we had comforted *Adelaide*, who had really been afflicted, the children asked their mother, why she had been blooded? Because, said she, I have had for this fortnight a most intolerable head-ach. This fortnight, mamma, and you never men-  
tioned

tioned it ! What good would it have done, repeating every moment " how bad my head is !" I should have shewn great weakness, tired every body, and complaining would have done me no good : But, mamma, you did not even look as if you suffered pain ; and you taught me my lessons as usual. You will never, my love, find me neglect an employment so dear to me for so trifling a matter ! You see, my friend, what excellent lessons of courage were contained in those few words ; and these are the kind of lessons which are really useful. After this conversation, Madame *d'Almane* entreated Monsieur *d'Aimeri*, and Madame *Valmont*, not to commend *Adelaide* for that sensibility, which made her faint : for in fact, these kind of praises may, by our wishing to obtain them again, occasion affectation and hypocrisy. You should not praise children for their lively and quick demonstrations of sensibility ; but for their habitual and constant proofs of duty and sweetness of temper. Adieu, my dear Viscount ; it is midnight, an unlawful hour at B—— Castle. I quit you to go to bed, for I must rise again before day.

## LETTER XXI.

*From the Baroness d'Almane, to Madame d'Ostalis.*

YOU afford me great pleasure, my dear child, by the accounts you give me of the attention you pay to your health. In your present situation, it is an indispensable duty, though unfortunately at this

this time, is not thought so. Remember what your opinion was of a Lady who was ordered by her Physician to keep her chamber for four months, for fear she should miscarry. She declared, “ Such “ caution did not agree with her vivacity, and by “ that agreeable vivacity she lost her child.” You then thought she must have a very bad heart to be capable of such imprudent conduct, and a worse understanding to suffer it to be made known. I am charmed with you for having maintained this opinion; and that, notwithstanding fashion and example, you will not set up late, or fatigue yourself by constant visiting or travelling far in a carriage. In regard to the desire you have for suckling your child, I have some observations to make, which require me to be particular. You appear to be much struck with all that *Rousseau* says on this subject; among other things he says, “ She who suckles “ the child of another person instead of her own, “ is a bad mother; how then can she be a good “ nurse?” This observation of his has given you great reluctance to trust “ your child to the cares “ of an interested and mercenary woman.” But you do not consider, this woman only deprives her infant of milk, to ensure him his bread, or at least to provide him with those necessaries, of which, without this sacrifice, he would stand in need. So far from being a “ bad mother,” she has, on the contrary, shewed herself to be possessed of real tenderness. Nature has undoubtedly convinced us of the pleasing obligations we are under to suckle our children; and we ought not to dispense with it, but when we are obliged by still more essential duties. If your husband does not oppose it, and if, without hurting his interest or his fortune, you can confine yourself

yourself to your own family for a twelvemonth, eighteen months, or perhaps for two years, you ought not to hesitate; indeed, you would be very wrong not to do it. But you will say, I see that every woman who suckles her child goes out visiting to publick places, and to Court, and weans her children at eight or nine months old. I am sensible of all this, and even know many who go to balls, and dance at them; I meet them every where dressed with large hoops, stiffened stays, &c. &c. Do you think that the children of these elegant nurses would not be much happier in a cottage, with a good careful country-woman to attend them? You are acquainted with a relation of mine, Madame *d'A*—; if you wish to be a good nurse, you must imitate her. You must live a retired life, taking great care of your health, and never going abroad but for exercise; receiving no visits but those of relations or intimate friends, and determine not to wean your child till the state of its health, the advancement of its teeth and its strength, will permit this to be done with safety. I remember, one winter I often dined at a house where I constantly met with a young Lady who suckled her child; she was perfectly well dressed, and in the most fashionable style. But she scarcely was seated before she began to talk of her child. And we directly heard the shrill cries of an infant in swaddling clothes, whom they brought to her wrapt up in a rich mantle, and the mother gave it suck before seven or eight Gentlemen. I observed the men laugh, and whisper to each other. This scene appeared to me to be distressing, as well as indecent. I frequently went from thence to Madame *d'A*—, who fulfilled the same duty with that modest simplicity

plicity which true virtue always dictates to us, even in her most sublime actions; for we are only proud of doing what is right, in proportion to the efforts it costs us, and the little pleasure we derive from it. I have seen Madame *d'Ar*— in the midst of her family and friends; and I have experienced the sweetest emotion in seeing her with her infant in her arms: that infant, for whose sake she had sacrificed without difficulty, and without vanity, the gay world, and all the pleasures it offers us! There is certainly no sight more interesting or respectable, than to see a beautiful young woman fulfilling the first duties of nature. For what she now does for her child, who does not so much as know her, proves what she will be capable of doing one day for him, when she enjoys the happiness of being beloved by him, and when she has assured to herself more right to his tenderness. But, my dear daughter, reflect on the numerous obligations you bring on yourself by determining to suckle your child; and remember, it is better not to impose on yourself such a duty, than to fulfill it imperfectly.

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## LETTER - XXII.

*The Baroness d'Almane, to the Viscountess d'Limours.*

**N**O, my dear friend, I do not perceive the approach of winter with grief and terror; on the contrary, I thank Heaven, I shall not be obliged to catch cold in the road to Versailles, or in the streets of Paris. I shall not receive visitors, who are as tiresome as they are idle; nor shall I hear Gluck and

and Piccini, both of whom I admire so much, continually taken to pieces ! Instead of these things, I now only go abroad for pleasure and for health. I wear only a neat and convenient dress, and only associate with people I love. If you were here, who should I wish for more, or what could be wanting to my happiness ? I assure you, for these eight months, that I have left Paris, I never passed a day without congratulating myself on the resolution I have taken, and at the same time reflecting with pain, that the same duties which have brought me here, will oblige me in three years to return to Paris ! I have a favour to ask of you, my dear friend. I think I told you Madame *de Valmont* has a sister, who is a nun. But before I tell you what I wish of you, I will relate to you the history of this unfortunate young Lady. Madame *de Valmont* acquainted me with it last night, and I am sure you will join with me in being deeply interested for her. Mons. *d'Aimeri* had four children. *Cecilia*, who was the youngest, was only three years old when she lost her mother ; she was educated in a convent at Province, and did not come out of it till she was thirteen, when she attended the nuptials of her eldest sister, Madame *d'Oley*, who, as soon as she was married, immediately set out for Paris. *Cecilia* remained in the country with her father and her second sister, who was three years older than herself, and who was soon after married to Mons. *Valmont*, and at the end of two years went to settle in Languedoc ; she was strongly attached to *Cecilia*, whose amiable qualities, both of person and mind, were equally interesting ; and what made her still more so, was, that she had the misfortune not to be loved by her father. On the eve of Madame *de Valmont*'s departure,

parture, the two sisters passed the night together in lamenting their separation. When day-light appeared, *Cecilia*, bathed in tears, threw herself into the arms of her sister, and pressing her to her bosom, cried out, "Oh! my only friend and support! " in an hour's time I shall lose you; what will become of me in your absence? Who will excuse me to my father? Who will endeavour to conquer his aversion to me? You are the only one in the world who loves the poor *Cecilia*! Oh, my sister, my dear sister! when you leave me, what will become of me?" Indeed the unfortunate *Cecilia* had but too much reason to lament her fate. Her sister was no sooner departed, than her father sent *Cecilia* back to the convent where she had been brought up. She was sixteen years old when she returned to that place, from whence she was never to come back! Mons. *d'Aimeri*, wholly employed in the establishment of his only son, went to Paris; and some months after, *Cecilia* was informed she had no other alternative given her, but she must take the veil. Too gentle, and too timid to oppose the will of a father so absolute, she obeyed without resistance, and without murmuring; but her heart was no longer free. She loved; she was beloved; but still ignorant of the sentiments she felt. In giving up the world, she thought it was her sister only whose loss she regretted; her tears were given to friendship, when, alas! it was love which made them flow! A young man, called the Chevalier *de Murville*, a relation of Mons. *d'Aimeri*, was the object of this unfortunate passion; and he possessed all those virtues and amiable qualities which justified *Cecilia* in her choice. His mother had been some years retired from the world, and lived on a small estate

estate about ten leagues from the Convent, where *Cecilia* resided. The year of her novitiate was almost elapsed, and the day was soon to arrive, when she was to make that dreadful engagement, which must never be broken!

That very day, her inhuman father had fixed upon for the celebration of his son's nuptials at Paris, where he was giving himself up to transports of joy: whilst his unhappy daughter was completing at the age of seventeen her miserable sacrifice . . . At length it was finished. *Cecilia* no longer lives for the world; and the gloomy walls which inclose her, are the bounds which obstruct her future felicity.

The evening after her profession, a messenger on horseback desired to speak with her from Madame *de Murville*, on an affair of the greatest consequence: she went to the parlour, and the man presented her with a letter, telling her, that a footman of Madame *de Murville*'s had set out the evening before, with express orders to deliver the letter the same day; but that two leagues from the Convent he had had the misfortune to fall from his horse and to break his leg. A long fainting fit had followed this accident; but some countrymen had brought him to the farmer's house, who now informed her of this misfortune; and that the man had not recovered his senses till the next day, when he gave the letter to the farmer, who promised to deliver it. In saying these words, he gave the letter to *Cecilia*, who instantly flew to her chamber to read it. She opened it with the greatest emotion, which was infinitely more increased, when she saw it was written by Mons. *de Murville*! This letter, which *Cecilia* thought herself obliged to give to Madame

— *Q u i n t*, and which she permitted me to copy, was written in these terms :

*From the Castle of S—, the fifteenth of May.*

“ WHAT to-morrow ! . . . is it then to-morrow ?  
“ . . . . I cannot finish. . . . My mouth cannot  
“ pronounce these dreadful words ! . . . . *Cecilia*,  
“ it is no longer time to dissemble . . . . What then  
“ could you never read it in my heart ? . . . . Alas,  
“ in happier days, I dared to flatter myself some-  
“ times that your heart was not insensible. I  
“ opened all my soul to that inhuman father, who  
“ has sacrificed you. He deprived me of all hope,  
“ and I condemned myself to silence. Ah, if I  
“ could have foreseen the tyranny they were exer-  
“ cising against you ! No, my *Cecilia* ; you should  
“ not have been the victim of it. In spite of the  
“ cruel father, who banished you, in spite of the  
“ family who forsake you ; nay, even in spite of  
“ yourself ; I should have found means to have de-  
“ livered you from the destiny prepared for you.  
“ But, far distant from you, in a foreign country,  
“ I was ignorant of the misfortune, and had no  
“ suspicion of it. I received a letter, informing  
“ me my mother was dangerously ill. I instantly  
“ left Spain, and arrived here : what dreadful mis-  
“ fortunes attended my return ! I found my mo-  
“ ther at the last extremity ; and I was informed  
“ *Cecilia* was just going to take the veil . . . .  
“ That instant convinced me, to what a degree I  
“ loved. . . . Oh ! victim, as interesting as dear  
“ to me, Nature and Friendship betray you, but  
“ love still remains. I alone will be your father,  
“ friend, brother ; I will be your defender, your  
“ deliverer ; oh, my *Cecilia* ! Your husband. . . .

“ Since you are yet free, you are mine ; your  
“ lations have broken every tye that united you ;  
“ you belong to no one but me. .... Yes ! I  
“ fwear to devote my life to you : an oath, which  
“ doubtless, is as sacred, and more agreeable to  
“ the Supreme Being, than that which you are  
“ about to take. .... Ah ! pity me, for not be-  
“ ing able to fly to you. .... If you knew what  
“ my heart feels on this account. .... But my  
“ mother is dying ; and if I was capable of leaving  
“ her, should I be worthy of you ? However. ....  
“ if this letter cannot persuade you ; if you still  
“ persist in this dreadful purpose ! .... I tremble :  
“ this idea alone rends my heart and overturns my  
“ reason. Listen to me, *Cecilia*. .... I still re-  
“ spect the cruel author of your fate. .... You  
“ are free : but if you have the weaknes to obey  
“ him, from that moment, I shall no longer ac-  
“ knowledge him as your father : I shall only re-  
“ gard him as a detestable tyrant. .... And, at  
“ least, I will not die without being revenged.  
“ For his own sake then, dare to resist him, or this  
“ trembling hand, that now writes to you ; this  
“ hand, guided by hatred and despair, will pierce  
“ the heart of the monster that has sacrificed you.  
“ Let him keep his fortune, and reserve his affec-  
“ tion for his son ; let him disinherit you ; what  
“ does it signify to me ; let me but have *Cecilia*,  
“ and I will be the most submissive, the most grate-  
“ ful, and the happiest of his children. I fled,  
“ from you, I endeavoured to forget you, and these  
“ vain efforts have only served to convince me that  
“ I cannot live without you. I dare believe, you  
“ esteem me enough to trust to my hands the care  
“ of your happiness and reputation. I only require  
“ from

“ from you the courage of declaring, you cannot  
 “ take the vows ; I will undertake the rest ; and will  
 “ only see you, to lead you to that altar, where the  
 “ most holy and gentle ties shall unite us for ever.  
 “ . . . . I can depend on the man, who brings  
 “ this letter ; I am certain you will receive it  
 “ this evening. I cannot think you will be in-  
 “ sensible to its contents. Yet a dreadful heaviness  
 “ oppresses my heart ; bitter tears run down my  
 “ cheeks . . . Oh, *Cecilia*, my dear *Cecilia* ! Take  
 “ pity on my situation ; do not prepare for yourself  
 “ eternal regrets ; remember, that you are but  
 “ seventeen years old. Ah ! preserve your liberty :  
 “ ought you not to live for me ! . . . I wait for your  
 “ answer as for the sentence which is to fix my  
 “ destiny !”

*The Chevalier de MURVILLE.*

Imagine, if it is possible, the situation of the unhappy *Cecilia* on reading this letter ! She is only informed she is beloved, and this in so tender and passionate a manner, when she is irrecoverably lost ! She had not till then discovered even her own sentiments ; a few hours ago, she might have changed her lot, and ensured her felicity ; but to receive the letter now, was only adding weight to her misfortunes ! . . . . Surprize, affliction, and despair, made *Cecilia* stupid and motionless ; a dreadful palleness covered her face ; a death-like coldness seemed to freeze her heart. Deprived of the powers of reflection, she, however, feels all the horror of her destiny, and she knows she has no hope left but in death. At length, by degrees, recovering from the lethargy she was in, she cast wild and eager looks around her ; every object which encompassed her

only reminded her of her misfortunes, and of the sacrifice she had made. She cast her eyes on a table, where her long and beautiful hair, which had been cut off previously to her taking the vows, had been placed. At the sight of it she trembles ; an inexpressible impulse of passion, mixed with terror, grief, and fury, tears her soul and distracts her reason. She rose hastily, and cried out, " What then, is there no means of extricating myself from the dreadful abyss into which I am fallen ? Cannot I fly .... Cannot I escape ? But what do I say, great God ! What a horrible idea ! .... Oh, unfortunate *Cecilia* ! " It is now that you must die ! " In finishing these words, she fell back in her chair, and burst into a flood of tears. She took up the fatal letter, and read it again : every line, every expression in it, was a mortal wound to her heart ! How could she conquer a passion, whose violence was encreased by her gratitude. Her imagination presents to her view every thing which can add to her grief and despair. She sees her lover becoming furious, breathing revenge, and wishing only for death ! She sees her father falling under his fatal stroke, or tearing from him his own life. These fatal pictures penetrate her with horror ; less beloved, she would have had less to fear. Nevertheless, she could not support the idea, that the Chevalier *Murville* should ever be comforted for her loss ! At length she determined to answer his letter, and she wrote a billet, containing these words : " Your letter arrived too late .... *Cecilia* no longer lives for you ! .... Forget me .... live happy .... and respect my father." ....

The unfortunate Chevalier *de Murville* received this note at the moment his mother died. He could not

not support so many misfortunes at once: a violent fever, attended by an alarming delirium, brought him in a few days to the brink of the grave. His illness lasted a long time; and he was scarcely out of danger, when he set about settling his affairs, in order to leave that country and France for ever. Passing through Languedoc, he stopped at Madame *de Valmont*'s, who had always shewn him the tenderest friendship. He asked to see her in private. They conducted him to an apartment where she was alone. As soon as she saw him, she ran to him, and embracing him, shed a flood of tears. He concluded by this, that *Cecilia* had informed her of his passion. He was not deceived; he conjured her to let him see *Cecilia*'s letter; she could not refuse; and you will judge whether this letter would not encrease the love as well as the grief of the Chevalier.

*From the Abbey of ——, 12th of June.*

“ I AM still alive.... But I thought I had  
 “ reached the end of my troubles. I have seen at  
 “ at a small distance the wished-for port. I have  
 “ been surrounded by gloomy tapers, and Priests  
 “ exhorting me to die..... Alas!.. It was un-  
 “ necessary. Why did they not rather exhort me  
 “ to support life? Oh, my sister, in what a time  
 “ did I know my heart! The day itself..... I  
 “ tremble.... Read the letter I send you; it will  
 “ inform you of every thing. This letter, which  
 “ I now put into your hands, is the last sacrifice  
 “ which remains for me to make..... How cruel  
 “ it is.... This dear writing, which I shall never  
 “ see again!..... But every word which is ex-

“ pressed in it, is engraved for ever in my heart !  
“ .... If you love me, my dear sister, preserve  
“ it always .... If it is not permitted me to keep it,  
“ at least let me think that it still exists. Let it  
“ be dear to you .... and think that my being de-  
“ prived of it, is exactly what you would feel, if  
“ absent from the person you best love .... If you  
“ knew how painful it is to me to part with it !  
“ But, now alas ! every thing is a crime in your  
“ unhappy sister ; even the confession of the grief  
“ which destroys her ! Insupportable restraint !  
“ Which brings on me the excess of despair. You  
“ know my heart and my disposition ; you know  
“ whether I was born to cherish virtuous prin-  
“ ciples ; but you would tremble with horror,  
“ was I to give you an account of all the fatal  
“ ideas, which for these three weeks past, have  
“ troubled and blackened my imagination : crimes  
“ pursue and surround me ! .... I find in the most  
“ common objects, in the most trifling actions, hor-  
“ rible temptations ... When I walk in our melan-  
“ choly gardens, my trembling eye measures the  
“ height of the walls ; and a thousand times have I  
“ dared to conceive the foolish and guilty project,  
“ of freeing myself from them ..... The first  
“ days of my recovery, when I sat at table, during  
“ that pensive silence, which is imposed on us,  
“ what horrible thoughts disturbed my reason !  
“ .... The knife lay near me ! .... I cannot  
“ finish ..... Oh, Heaven ! is it possible this  
“ heart, once so innocent, could entertain such  
“ dreadful ideas ? Ah ! believe me, the most cruel  
“ of my torments is the remorse which tears my  
“ soul ..... Sometimes bathed in tears, I im-  
“ plore with some degree of hope, the mercy and  
“ support

“ support of the Divine Being, not able to make  
“ to him a sacrifice of the passion which reigns  
“ in my heart. I intreat him to support me un-  
“ der my affliction, and to give me patience to  
“ bear it without murmuring. It is then I feel  
“ the only consolation, of which I am capable.  
“ A heavenly voice seems from my heart to pro-  
“ nounce these words: *Do not renounce happiness;*  
“ *passion troubles and destroys it. Religion and*  
“ *virtue alone, can ensure it to you.* At other times,  
“ I find myself too guilty to hope for pardon of  
“ so many offences . . . . And I again relapse into  
“ every anguish which doubt and terror can occa-  
“ sion. Forgive, my sister, these complainings;  
“ you will hear no more of them. I promise,  
“ hereafter I will respect the rigorous duty which  
“ condemns me to silence: I will no longer speak  
“ to you of my troubles or of their cause . . . .  
“ And for you, my dear sister, never mention him  
“ to me again! . . . . You will see him un-  
“ doubtedly, and perhaps you may see him com-  
“ forted, consoled! . . . . Yet his letter is so pas-  
“ sionate! Do you think that time, and the dissi-  
“ pations of the world, can destroy an affection  
“ so ardent and so sincere. . . . Ah, if you think  
“ so, do not tell me so; you will break my heart,  
“ but not alter my sentiments. The hope of  
“ sometimes engaging his thoughts, is the only  
“ thing which reconciles me to life . . . . Shall I  
“ own to you, the greatest of my afflictions, is  
“ the thought that he is ignorant to what degree  
“ I love him. Yes; if he knew my heart, he  
“ never could forget me. Perhaps he thinks me  
“ insensible, ungrateful . . . . Ah! conceal  
“ from him this passion, which distracts me! But,

“ my dear sister, will you suffer him to accuse  
“ me of ingratitude? Oh, my God! What do  
“ I hear? .... The bell calls, and informs me  
“ that one of my companions is in the agonies of  
“ death! .... How happy is she! .... She is  
“ going to die.... Adieu! I enclose in this  
“ packet the hair for which you have asked me.  
“ That hair, which you have so frequently  
“ adorned! You will not see it without weeping.  
“ May this sad relick recal to your remembrance  
“ my miserable fate, and tender friendship; and  
“ obtain from you that indulgence and com-  
“ passion, which are the only remaining blessings  
“ left for the unhappy *Cecilia*.”

When the Chevalier *de Murville* had read this letter, he threw himself at the feet of Madame *de Valmont*, entreating her to give him *Cecilia*'s hair; and to obtain this favour, he made use of the same means which he had already employed to get Madame *de Valmont* to shew him her letter, protesting, if she refused him this last request, he would not leave France without being revenged on Mons. *d'Aimeri*. His violence and threats so terrified Madame *de Valmont*, that she determined to let him have what he so ardently had desired; and she gave into his hands the little casket which contained the hair of her sister. The Chevalier *de Murville* received it on his knees; he opened it with a trembling hand; he wished, yet dreaded to see those long and beautiful tresses which he had so often admired on the head of the unfortunate *Cecilia*. He had no sooner cast his eyes on them, than he trembled and turned pale; then shutting the casket, and taking it in his arms, Adieu, Madame, said he, Adieu for ever. I am going to leave

leave this abhorred country, never more to return to it ; and you will never hear of me again till you receive this precious treasure which you have entrusted me with, and from which nothing but death shall separate me. When I am no more, it shall be returned to you with these words. He hastily quitted the room, not waiting for Madame *de Valmont* to reply. Since that day we have heard nothing of him, and are entirely ignorant of his destiny ; but as *Cecilia*'s hair has never been returned to Madame *de Valmont*, it is probable the Chevalier *de Murville* is still living, and is concealed in some corner of the world. With regard to Mons. *d'Aimeri*, Heaven has already punished him for his barbarity. His son, seduced by a taste for bad company and gaming, in a very short time lost his reputation, ruined his constitution, and destroyed his fortune ; and three years after his marriage died without issue. Mons. *d'Aimeri* paid all his son's debts, and retired to Languedoc to live with his second daughter, Madame *de Valmont*, with a fortune which, from being very considerable, was now reduced to a very moderate one. It is imagined he intends leaving it to Charles, the son of Madame *de Valmont*, of whom he is passionately fond. As for *Cecilia*, time and reflection have insensibly triumphed over this passion, so fatal to her repose ; and receiving the sublime consolation which religion affords her, she gathers at this time the sweet fruits of true piety, peace, and resignation ; and she is become an example and pattern of goodness to all her companions. Such is her present situation ; but the cruel disappointment she had met with, has injured her health greatly, and, together with the strict rules made use of in the

convent, have almost destroyed her; and for these six months past, her life has been in great danger. Madame *de Valmont* is very anxious for her taking a journey to Paris, in order to consult the most celebrated Physicians. This permission has been easily obtained; and the favour I have to request of you, my dear friend, is, that you will go to Madame *d'Oley*, and beg of her to receive at her house her unfortunate sister, and keep her there for two or three months. It will doubtless appear extraordinary to you, that Madame *de Valmont* should charge you with this message, when Madame *d'Oley* is her sister, as well as *Cecilia's*. It is therefore necessary I should give you an idea of Madame *d'Oley's* character. The immense fortune she possesses has not been able to console her for being the wife of a financier; and not having sense enough to surmount such a weakness, she suffers so much the more, as she only converses with the servants of the court; and so is continually reminded of the misfortune under which she groans. They never mention the King, Queen, or the Court of Versailles, or the elegant dresses worn there, that she does not feel such inward anguish of mind, that she is obliged to change the conversation in order to conceal it. She has, exclusively of this consideration, every thing to make her amends. She lives in great pomp, has an elegant house, gives grand entertainments, and has her box at the opera and comedy. But, in short, she loves nothing; is tired of every thing, never judges of any thing but from the opinion of others; yet has considerable pretensions to wit, with a great deal of caprice and ill nature; and above all, is extremely insipid. Though she is very proud of being a

woman of family, she does not shew the least attachment to her father, because he has quitted the army, and is retired from the world ; and she expects nothing from him. She does not love Madame *de Valmont*, who she only looks upon as a downright country-woman ; and she has undoubtedly forgot that she has a sister who is a nun. Thus you see your assistance will be necessary to us. I send you a letter to carry to her from Madame *de Valmont* ; you will appear to be much interested for the two sisters, and I am sure you may obtain from her vanity, more than could be expected from her tenderness. Adieu, my dear friend ! it is time to finish this volume ; but you will doubtless pardon me, on account of the interesting story of the unfortunate *Cecilia*.

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### LETTER XXIII.

*Answer from the Viscountess Limours.*

OH this charming, this unfortunate *Cecilia* ! How I love and pity her ! and the poor Chevalier *de Murville*, how I admire him also ! I am sorry, however, he is not dead. I expected that the casket, containing *Cecilia*'s hair, would be returned, with an interesting letter written on his death-bed ; this seems to be all that is wanting to complete the melancholy tale. This despairing, this passionate lover, to live so long ! . . . . . In spite of myself, I am tormented with the idea that he may be now living at his ease in some remote corner of the world. Perhaps attached to some other object ; and if he has made a sacrifice of the hair ! oh, the

monster! . . . . He has no other way of justifying himself but sending it back instantly. But really now, have you not an earnest desire to know what is become of him? I have already composed ten or twelve Romances on this subject, every one more affecting than the preceding. *Cecilia* is going to leave the convent for some months; they will see each other again. Faintings, congratulations, &c. &c. ensue! . . . . or else she herself will receive her own hair with a most pathetic letter. . . . . My opinion is, that he has never quitted France; for how could he tear himself from a country inhabited by *Cecilia*? He lives here disguised, concealed perhaps at *la Trappe*, or possibly is turned hermit. In short, I cannot help thinking that we shall soon hear what is become of him. But to return to the commission with which I am charged. The very day I received your letter, I wrote a note to Madame *d'Oley*, to beg a private interview with her; and the next day I went to wait on her. They conducted me through a long and superb suite of apartments, at the end of which I found her in an elegant little room, seated on a sofa, and carelessly reading a pamphlet, which I believe she had only taken up on hearing a carriage enter the court-yard. She advanced towards me with the most obliging air, and the first compliments being over, I took from my pocket Madame *de Valmont*'s letter, which I requested her to read immediately. You know that kind of forced smile and affected good humour which politeness spreads over the countenance. Alas! at the name of sister, Madame *d'Oley* was entirely changed, and coldness and embarrassment immediately took place; I did not appear to observe it. But whilst

she

she was reading her letter from Madame *de Valmont*, I spoke much of your friendship for her, and the lively interest which we both took in the fate of the unhappy *Cecilia*. Madame *d'Oley* answered, *That she knew very little of her two sisters; that she had been much neglected by them, but that she had not the less desire of being useful to them; yet that it appeared very difficult, in her situation, to keep a nun at her house for two months; and she had no idea where she could lodge her.* Here I could not help interrupting her, and saying, *Surely, Madam, this house is sufficiently large to accommodate a person, who for ten years past has been contented with a cell.* Madam, said she, *I ought to lodge my sister properly, or not at all.* She thought this reply so noble, and so clever, and it gave her a look of such satisfaction, that it entirely deprived me of the little patience I had till then preserved. Indeed, Madam, replied I, *what appears to me the least proper, is to let your sister die for want of necessary assistance.* At these words Madame *d'Oley* blushed exceedingly, yet thought proper to conceal her vexation; she therefore softened her features, talked of her natural sensibility, her affection for her sisters; and ended by assuring me, if Mons. *d'Oley* made no objections, she would send for *Cecilia* as soon as she could get permission. We then parted coolly enough. In going from her apartment, I took it in my head to ask if Mons. *d'Oley* was at home. Finding he was, I went to him, and informed him of my commission. He received me with great politeness; and I was perfectly satisfied, as he shewed as much good will, as his wife had shewn roughness; but I believe she was not very well pleased, when she knew I had

had assured myself of Mr. *d'Oley*'s consent to receive *Cecilia*. However, she has written to me to-day, and tells me *Cecilia* may come towards the beginning of the winter, and may make use of the apartment they will prepare for her. She did well to give me this notice; for if she had deferred it, I was absolutely determined to have taken charge of the interesting *Cecilia* myself; and I should then have had the double pleasure of obliging the most amiable person in the world, and at the same time of humbling the pride of a woman, as hard-hearted as she is vain. I have not any other news to tell you, but that the Chevalier *d'Herbain* is at last returning from his travels. He will certainly be much concerned to find you at Paris. I dare say he will visit you, if you permit him; for two hundred leagues can scarcely appear more than a walk to a man who has been twice round the world. Adieu, my dear friend! I send you a letter from my brother to the Baron. As his letters all go through Paris to Languedoc, he thinks it better to send them in my packet, than to let them go separate; and if you will direct the Baron's answers, I will take care of them also.

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#### LETTER XXIV.

*From the Count de Roseville, Brother to the Viscountess Limours, to the Baron d'Almane.*

**Y**OUR letters, my dear Baron, equally interest and instruct me; you are educating your son, I am bringing up a Prince, born to be a Sovereign. The

The desire of being useful to the Public, can alone engage me to undertake this noble, but difficult employment. But the reflections of a good father, and such a man as you are, will be of great use to me ; for paternal love must be the most enlightened upon all these matters.

Yes, my dear Baron, I have read all the books that have been written on the subject of Education in general, and that of Princes in particular ; and since you desire to know my sentiments, I will tell you them with my usual sincerity. *Rousseau* is indebted to *Seneca*, to *Montaigne*, to *Locke*, and to Mons. *de Fenelon*, for every thing that is truly useful in his book, except one important truth, which he has had the merit of discovering first ; it is, “ That the greatest fault we can commit in education, is that of being too hasty, and of sacrificing every thing to the desire of making our scholars appear brilliant.”

It is painful to reflect, that, after giving advice so useful and so wise, *Rousseau* should not feel the inconvenience of falling into the opposite extreme. He will neither have *Emilius* taught to read, nor to write ; and he proposes, on the contrary, a plan of education as defective, as the one he objects to. As to the rest, his Work is filled with pieces of sublime eloquence, declamations in a bad taste, and containing dangerous principles, failing both in interest and in action ; and he offers almost in every page opposite inferences. But we ought without doubt to forget his faults, on account of the superior beauties which are to be found in his book. However, it is to the Ladies that the Author of *Emilius* owes his great success ; for they in general praise him with enthusiasm,

thusiasm, although no Author treats them with less respect. He has actually denied them superior talents or genius. He accuses them all, without exception, of deceit and coquetry; in short he loved, but he did not esteem them. He has done more justice to their charms, than any other person: he has mentioned them with contempt, but with an air of passion, and passion excuses every thing. Before I quit *Rousseau*, I cannot forbear quoting a little paragraph out of *Emilius*, which always gave me great offence, even before I had undertaken the employment I am now engaged in. He says, "That a Prince made him a proposal to educate his son, and that he refused it. If I had accepted his offer, added he, and that I had erred in my method, it would have been an education thrown away. If I had succeeded, it would have been still worse. His son would have renounced the title; he would no longer have wished to be a Prince." And why would he have renounced a title, which should give him power to do so much good? To make so many people happy, and to set so many great examples? Merely with a view of living independently, and without use to any one. . . . . What false reasoning is this?

I know not whether you have ever read a little book which was published before *Emilius*, and from which *Rousseau* has taken some of his notions. It is written by *Moncrief*, and entitled "Essays on the Necessity and Means of Pleasing." This Work is not written in the most elegant stile, but it is full of good sense, sound reasoning, and truth; and contains many new sentiments. I have remarked, says the Author, "That two ideas, which

“ which naturally have no connection with each  
“ other, nevertheless become closely united,  
“ when they are presented at the same time. How  
“ many persons are there who cannot separate the  
“ ideas of spectres and darkness? When a child,  
“ continued he, enquires what is the use of  
“ money? They tell him it is to buy sugar  
“ plumbs, play-things, and fine cloaths. This is  
“ giving him very narrow and confined notions.  
“ Money, he will say, is designed for the purpose  
“ of dressing and diverting me. Would it cost  
“ him more trouble to inform him, money was  
“ made to do good to our fellow-creatures, and  
“ to make ourselves beloved by them?” *Moncrief*  
says very excellent things on the earliest education of Princes; and among others, that “ If one  
“ would inspire children, born in a superior rank  
“ of life, with the qualities which they ought to  
“ carry with them when they come into society,  
“ we should not make use of terms which only  
“ awaken their vanity. We tell them, they  
“ must be affable and obliging, &c. &c. On the  
“ contrary, we ought to make use of expressions  
“ which may render them modest, and to recom-  
“ mend to them, that they should entertain an  
“ esteem and veneration for men distinguished by  
“ their virtues. We should speak to them of re-  
“ spect, deference, gratitude, friendship, &c.” I  
was much struck with this remark, and have frequently found an opportunity of giving my young Prince an excellent lesson on this subject. We have at this Court, a Minister who unites to the greatest talents every amiable quality of the heart and mind. I cannot do more justice to his genius, than by comparing it to his virtue: “ Despising intrigues,

intrigues, and all the little interested actions of common men, he looks forward to glory, and labours for no other end. In short, he owes his place merely to his reputation ; he accepted it for the public good, and he maintains himself in it by his merit, by his services, by the esteem of his Sovereign, and that of the nation. The truth of this simple eulogium cannot be doubted. It is neither dictated by gratitude nor friendship. I only know him by his actions, and I speak the more freely of him, as I shall never have any thing to ask from him. He very rarely comes to pay his Court to the young Prince, and when he does, he stays only a few moments. Very soon after my arrival here, he came one evening and found the Prince playing at nine pins. The latter having made a slight bow, smiled, and muttering something, returned again to his game. I then went up to the Minister, and said to him aloud, "Sir,  
" I entreat you to excuse the Prince ; when he is  
" less a child, and better instructed, he will cer-  
" tainly pay you the respect due to your person  
" and character."

I cannot express to you the astonishment which this word *respect*, occasioned in every body present ; some of them thought I had been essentially wanting to the Prince ; others thought that, being a stranger, I did not know the real meaning of the term. But all agreed, that I was incapable of discharging the employment with which I had been honoured. As to the Prince, he was so surprised that he let the bowl fall out of his hand ; and I saw I should have some difficulty to accustom his delicate ears to such unpleasant expressions. When we were alone, I expected he would have asked

asked for an explanation ; but he was piqued, and determined to keep silence. At length I began myself, by saying, " My Lord, be so good as to " explain to me the meaning of the word *re-  
spect*." This question made him blush, and after a moment's reflection he answered, " *Respect* " is what is due to my father."—" You think " then, that *respect* is only due to Princes ? " But . . . . Learn, my Lord, there are two sorts " of *respect* : one sort consists only in little cus- " tomary forms, mere outward shew ; for instance, " all those little ceremonies which *etiquette* re- " quires to be shewn to Princes. The other " *respect* comes from the heart ; it arises from the " esteem and admiration one naturally feels for " every good and great man. This *respect*, far " from lessening him who shews it, raises and " elevates him. Because it proves that he is sen- " sible of the excellence of virtue ; and lastly, be- " cause great souls only are capable of feeling " such a sentiment. But this kind of *respect* is " also due to my father. Yes, because he is a " good man, loves his subjects, and makes them " happy ; without which they would only treat " him with that *formal respect* which is due to " his birth. Thus the other kind of *respect*, " which is only due to virtue, Princes receive in " common with the rest of mankind. And this " is what I require from you with regard to " M. . . . . because he deserves it ; and more " from you than any other person, since he con- " tributes, by his talents and labours, to the " glory and prosperity of that nation, over which " you are one day to rule. I flatter myself, Sir, " that you will in time know how delightful it is,

" to

“ to feel this sentiment, and how glorious it is to  
“ inspire it . . . . Already I set no value on *for-*  
“ *mal respect*.—You are in the right; for it  
“ belongs only to your rank; without re-  
“ ference to your person. When you were only  
“ a twelve-month old, you received nearly as much  
“ honour as you receive now. The different  
“ orders of the State came in bodies, to compli-  
“ ment and address you, and you must have  
“ very confined notions to be proud of such  
“ things, which are only matters of mere form,  
“ and which they bestow on you even in your  
“ swaddling clothes. But if you cultivate  
“ your mind, if you acquire solid learning, if you  
“ become virtuous, and if you know how to ho-  
“ nour and reward merit in others, all the respect  
“ paid you will cease to be vain and trifling; and will  
“ become a faithful representation of the sentiments  
“ they feel for you. This conversation has pro-  
“ duced the happiest effects, and has destroyed  
“ that dangerous charm which is attached to  
“ those honours paid to Princes in their infancy.”

But to return to Works written on Education: I shall not speak of *Telemachus*; which is a master-piece, and equally above praise and criticism. I shall say nothing of *Bellisarius*, about which we have talked so many times; and which we both so greatly admire. But, as you have not met with two books, entitled, “ *The Education of a Prince*.” One of them written by *Chanteresne*, and the other by the *Abbe Dugnet*; I shall occasionally quote some passages from them as I find opportunity. This last Work had a great character when it first made its appearance; but tho’ it was very estimable, it has since fallen into oblivion,

livion, because it is tedious. If any body would take the trouble to reduce it into two volumes, it would be a very useful book. The Author has taken many of his ideas from Telemachus; but there are many very good ones of his own; and the following is one of them: "Prudence, when it is perfect, is always guarded against cunning, who has not the same advantage on her side. The light of prudence elevates her above every thing which deceit meditates in darkness, and will discover at a distance the cloud under which dissimulation hides itself so closely, that for fear of being seen, she sees almost nothing."

The *Abbe Dugnet* describes Courtiers with as much ingenuity as truth; and he also speaks perfectly well on the subject of flattery. "The only means," says he, "to defend one's self against it, is to be deaf to all compliments. For the heart never rejects them, when the ears have listened to them. To be cautious in this point, will guard us against it. And we must not suppose ourselves above the attacks of the grossest flatterer, unless we repulse with severity that which is more delicate and less visible. For it is with pride, as with all other passions; it is by not yielding to it in one instance, that we can conquer it. We only irritate it by our cautions, and put ourselves under a necessity of yielding to it entirely, when we pretend to compound with it."

My pupil has already accustomed himself not to admit any kind of praise. I have so well persuaded him, that at eight years old he can have no other merit, than that of being tractable, and of applying closely to his improvements; that I have convinced

vinced him of the folly and absurdity of the praises bestowed on him: which he sees clearly are only meant to seduce persons of his rank. He has derived even from pride itself a perfect detestation of flattery, and distrusts the smallest testimony of approbation, if it is not from persons who possess his confidence, that he receives them. Some time ago, the Prince his father, performed an action, the justice and benevolence of which, one might assuredly praise without flattery. I was the only one of those who approached him without saying any thing on the subject. The young Prince remarked it, and asked me the reason. I did not praise this action, replied I, because I have a high idea of your father, and because I truly respect him.—How?—Yes: I am not surprised at any of the good actions he does; for which reason you did not see me appear with that air of enthusiasm that you remarked in others, and which is only an affectation of wonder, that pays him a very bad compliment; since it shews they did not expect to find him capable of so virtuous an action. Besides, had it been the most brilliant that had ever been performed, respect would have kept me from praising it before the Prince.—Why so?—Modesty is so estimable a virtue, that without it the brightest action would lose half its lustre; therefore I ought to suppose the person I respect possesses this amiable and indispensable quality. And if I was to praise him to his face, it is as if I would say, “I have no kind of respect for “you, and I prove it openly to you, because I “believe you to be the vainest and proudest of “men.” It is so certain a truth, that praise, whatever it is founded upon, becomes an insult when

when bestowed in this manner. Were we to tell a beautiful woman in direct terms, how handsome she is; or to say to a wise man, how virtuous you are; we should too visibly shock their modesty and offend them. And, since it is disgraceful to receive praises of this kind, we ought not to be better pleased with those of a more refined nature. For they only differ in the words, the meaning is always the same.

These are the methods I make use of, not only to guard my scholar against flattery, but to convince him of the injury it does. It was necessary to begin by this, since without doing so, all other means would have been without effect. In my next letter, I will give you, as you desire, my opinion upon the principal sentiments which a Governor ought to instil into the mind of a young Prince. Adieu, my dear Baron; let me have your reflections with the freedom I have a right to expect from your friendship, and which I deserve, by the great confidence I place in you.

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## LETTER. XXV.

*The Viscountess to the Baroness d'Almane.*

I NEED not acquaint you, my dear friend, that Madame *d'Ostalis* was this morning, the 4th of Jan. happily delivered of a son, because I knew before she was put to bed, she wrote you a billet to acquaint you with the news. But at least you shall hear from me, that our amiable Nun, *Cecilia*, arrived last night. I have seen her, I have wept with

with her, and I have passed an hour and a half alone with her. If you wish to know the particulars, attend to me. On getting up from table to-day, I received a letter written in an unknown hand; I looked at the signature, and saw *Cecilia*. I instantly rung, and ordered my carriage, and then read my letter, which was only to express her thanks, &c. But it was written in the most elegant and interesting stile imaginable. It recalled to my mind that affecting letter she wrote to her sister in the first moments of her despair. I forgot that ten years are elapsed since that time; I forgot that she was now a reasonable being, and had derived consolation from experience. My heart was deeply affected; and in this disposition I got into my carriage; during my ride, I found myself so much interested for her, that I entered her apartment with the same tenderness and emotion that I should have experienced had it been the same morning she had taken the veil. I went in hastily, and found her sitting at a little table writing, and alone. As soon as she heard my name announced, she rose from her seat, came to me, and I embraced her with great tenderness. For a few moments I was unable to speak, having an inexpressible weight on my spirits; and I found that great misfortunes inspire one with as much respect and admiration, as we feel for persons possessed of superior qualities. Nothing appears to me more noble, than a person who has been persecuted by fortune, and who has submitted with resolution to her destiny. And I assure you, few things in my life ever appeared to me so truly prepossessing, as the first view of *Cecilia*. Her figure is as noble as it is interesting;

she

she is tall, and most elegantly formed, and has such eyes, as it is wholly impossible that the Chevalier *Murville* can ever forget. There is in them such a sweet, yet deep melancholy; they discover wisdom and tenderness. In short, every thing amiable is expressed in them. Besides which they are of a deep blue, and are adorned with the most beautiful dark eye-lashes I ever saw. And to complete my praise of her, she has a most delicate complexion, and an enchanting tone of voice. As far as I could collect from her conversation, which was very reserved, she met with a very cold reception from Madame *d'Oley*; but she speaks of Madame *de Valmont* with extreme tenderness; she loves you, without knowing you; and she has expressed to me much more gratitude, than my little services have merited; and all this with so much grace, and in such a manner, as could never be acquired by a knowledge of polite life only, as it must be the effect of an amiable disposition; without which, one can never possess that true politeness, which is so distinguished and so agreeable.

You wish me then, my dear friend, to speak to you about my little *Constance*. I am very glad of it, for you have no idea of the affection I feel for this dear child. She has so sweet a temper, that this is alone sufficient to make her beloved; so there is no occasion for punishments or penances. When she has committed a fault, I content myself with saying, *you afflict me, or you will make me ill*: in short, I only attempt to awaken her sensibility, but not to excite her fears. Tell me what you think of this? I dare say you will be of my opinion. *Constance* is adored throughout the house;

there is not a servant who does not feel a real affection for her, because she is accustomed to treat them well ; and I am continually repeating to her an excellent saying of an ancient Philosopher, *That we ought to treat our servants as if they were unhappy friends.* Adieu, my dear friend. I have taken your advice, and am seriously learning English. It tires me to death. But I begin to read prose tolerably. Farewell, my dear friend.

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## LETTER XXVI.

*Baroness d'Almane to the Viscountess.*

**I**F you are charmed with *Cecilia*, I can assure you, she is no less charmed with you. She has written a very long letter to *Madame de Valmont* ; and your charms, your wit, and your figure, fill up at least three pages of it.

I see with great pleasure, that you continue your English, and above all, my dear friend, that you employ yourself seriously in the education of our dear little *Constance*. You ask my advice on your manner of correcting her faults : I will answer you without ceremony, and with my usual freedom. This method of awakening the sensibility of children, as it is called, is of no use when it is abused ; or to speak more plainly, ought very seldom to be made use of. In continually repeating to your child by way of correcting her, that *she has afflicted you, or made you ill* ; you familiarize her to an idea, which ought to inspire her with horror ; that of making you unhappy : and at

at last, she will hear you make use of these expressions without feeling the smallest emotions ; so that, far from encreasing her sensibility, you will stifle and destroy it for ever, unless you change your method. Inflict on her therefore little punishments proper for her age. Deprive her of a favourite play-thing for a few days, or of something she likes to eat ; and for greater faults banish her from your own apartment, if you can be sure that her Governess will not amuse her in her own ; for if she is diverted during this disgrace, every thing is lost. As for me, when I give up *Adelaide* to Miss *Bridget*, I am sure that she will not speak a word to her ; that she will scarcely answer a single question ; and in short, will treat her with the greatest disdain. Besides this, *Adelaide* knows, that though I suffer a great deal, when I punish her in this manner, yet she is convinced I shall always persevere in it ; because I regard it as my duty, and because nothing prevents my doing it with the most scrupulous exactness. When she is received again into favour, I express the greatest satisfaction, by which I excite her sensibility and gratitude, without diminishing that necessary fear, which gives me so much command over her. That kind of fear, is the only esteem children are capable of feeling ; for if they do not fear those on whom they depend, they will despise instead of loving them. This kind of fear never destroys confidence. But take care never to inspire it by your presence, or by putting the smallest constraint on their diversions. You ought never to restrain them, but when they commit a fault ; and not in their gaiety. And by this means, you may assure yourself, that the affection of your child will equal

its respect for you. But if you are peevish, and check her in the midst of her amusements, you will inspire in her the same fear which a tyrant would excite; and that can only produce aversion.

We are then only truly noble, when we know our real situation. Insolence, so far from exalting us, in effect only disgraces us; even when it seems to succeed the best. This is so true, that a woman who rules her husband, a son who governs his father, make themselves despised, if they do not carefully conceal the power they exercise: all usurpation is naturally odious to us, and the love of order and justice, is found in all hearts which are not entirely corrupted. Therefore do not destroy that fear in your child, which I have just described to you; she ought to feel it, and you to cherish it. Let us respect and acknowledge the rights of others. But never let us be base enough to renounce those which Nature has given us; for this would be to reverse the order of things, and take from us all the merit of paying a proper regard to those on whom we are dependant.

*Locke* says, "Children should be always commended instead of punished, when they confess a fault, be it what it will." This does not appear to me to be right. When *Adelaide* accuses herself of a small fault, she is pardoned with a short exhortation, constantly attended with the praises due to her candour, and her confidence in me. If it is only a confession, that is, an answer to my questions, I punish her in proportion to her fault. If she comes to me, and owns she has been guilty of a serious fault, she is then punished but in a less degree, than if I had discovered what

she

she has acknowledged of her own accord. We come out of the hands of our Tutors with such false notions, that it is not astonishing we should stand in need of the experience of the world to rectify them. If our education has been a good one, experience would convince us that we have imbibed right and just principles ; and they would be the rule of our future conduct. Instead of which, the first thing we learn on our entrance into company is, that all we have been taught relative to morality, was either false or exaggerated : and this discovery gives us great satisfaction, as it allows us to look on all principles as prejudices, and permits us to deliver ourselves up to our passions. When a child, who has owned itself guilty of a fault, receives more praise by so doing, than if it had not committed it, it is very natural that she should imagine she may behave ill again, if she is but honest enough to confess it. This is the reason we see so many people boasting of their faults, and saying, with a ridiculous vanity : “ I confess myself peevish, capricious, and passionate ; ” as if these words would excuse and make amends for all their follies. Persuade your child, that it is right and noble to confess her faults freely ; but that it is infinitely more so, never to be guilty of any. When a girl is arrived at the age of fifteen or sixteen, what stories is she not told with the laudable intention of inspiring her with a horror for vice ! People fancy they do wonders, in telling her, “ that a woman who is not virtuous, is regarded by nobody, is banished from society,” &c. &c. At the same time they will see in the most polite circles, “ women of little virtue, who are very much taken notice

“ of.” They immediately conclude, their mothers or their Governesses are all liars; and that there can be no harm in their having an intrigue. This is all that is gained by not adhering to the truth. Virtue is so amiable, that it is unnecessary to employ artifice to make it esteemed. Let us leave falsehood and dissimulation to vice: which has need of it to conceal her deformity. But if we wish to succeed in our instructions let us always adhere to truth.

You must excuse my being “a little tedious” in this one letter, as it is necessary above all things, that I should express myself clearly. What I understand by principles, is to have a just idea of right and wrong; and I understand that what is meant by virtue, is to acquire a taste for that right, founded on principle; and strengthened by the custom of doing well. It is evident that education gives us these principles; and I think I have proved to you in some other letters, that it also gives us virtues; but you will doubtless tell me, all this is not sufficient to make us truly good. Experience is still necessary to give us a knowledge of our own strength, and to know how to use it; “to have had experience,” is in a length of time to have felt all the temptations of which we are susceptible; it is to be convinced that we cannot be happy or esteemed, but in proportion as we are virtuous; and as we have the *fortitude* to resist our passions. If you content yourself with only saying all this to your pupil, you give her only a lecture, and not that knowledge, which is to be gained solely by facts. Produce events; throw temptations in her way; and repeat these trials, increasing their attractions, as her reason gains strength.

strength. If she yields to them, let the punishment spring from the cause itself. For instance, if she tells a lie, punish her for it, as for any other fault; but, besides that, let her feel for a long time the great inconveniences attending this vice. Appear to have lost all confidence in her, distrust every thing she tells you, &c. &c. In short, prove every thing to her by actions and situations, instead of lectures; and your daughter at sixteen will have as much experience, as the generality of women at five-and-twenty.

It is necessary, that I make you a reply on a subject, which I consider, my dear friend, as a very important one. You tell your daughter "to regard servants as unhappy friends." I never admired this idea, as it is not founded on truth: we cannot regard persons without education as our friends; as to any thing else which is meant by this maxim, it is very allowable, as it proceeds from goodness of heart. But I know nothing more dangerous for a young Lady, than familiarity with servants. I would recommend it to her always to treat them with civility; but would expressly forbid all conversation with them: for she can only learn trifling and absurd expressions, low sentiments, and a taste for bad company; which generally proceeds from peoples' not being able to bear restraint, and preferring the society of persons beneath them, to that of whom they are obliged to treat with respect and deference, which will always be disagreeable to such as love to take the command. Adieu, my dear friend. I greatly fear this letter will tire you to death. But if you will consider this matter, you will perceive that it is necessary for me to acquaint you with the whole of my plan of education.

## LETTER XXVII.

*Answer from the Viscountess Limours.*

SO then my ideas of education, which I thought so good, are all worth nothing ; I cannot even deny it, since *experience* has already convinced me of it. I have been three months trying to break my little *Constance* of the unpoliteness of answering "Yes," or "No," without the addition of "Sir," or "Madam," which children have such an aversion to repeat. All my sufferings, all my maladies, were of no effect. At length your letter determined me to punish my girl for this fault ; and for these four days past she has never omitted saying Sir, and Madam, very distinctly, which has persuaded me that your method is better than mine.

I had a very serious dispute yesterday about you : they were talking of you and Madame *d'Ostalis* ; and they thought it very strange that you did not come to see her in her lying-in, as you affected to love her like your own child. I said, Madame *d'Ostalis* was one-and-twenty, had an excellent state of health, and this was not her first lying-in ; and it would have been very simple in you to have left your children to take a journey of two hundred leagues, to be present at an event which could not occasion you any apprehensions. They persevered in saying, that you could not love Madame *d'Ostalis* ; that you had only sacrificed so much of your time to her, and educated her so well, in order to establish her advantageously in the world. Through vanity, in this country essential benefits go for nothing ; and praise is only given to trifles. It is because

because we praise with reluctance what we cannot imitate ; and for this reason we do not so much admire sensibility for its great sacrifices, as when it shews itself by attentions, visits, and those little acts of friendship, in which we take so much pleasure, because the most trifling people can give the same testimonies of regard.

Notwithstanding your predictions, Mons. *de Limours* is more closely than ever engaged to Madame *Gerville*. She has perfectly regained the empire over him, which for a short time she had lost. M. *de Limours* now almost lives with her, and their reconciliation has put me so much out of temper, that we live infinitely worse together than before their quarrel. I have two daughters, the eldest will probably be settled in less than two years, as she is now fifteen ; and I have the pain to reflect, that the most intriguing, and the most ill-bred woman in the world, will chuse a husband for her. For Mons. *de Limours*, though he is sensible of her faults, suffers himself to be entirely ruled by her ; and is so very indolent and careless, that he is pleased when any body will take the trouble to consider and determine for him, and by that means save him so much labour. Yet he does not want sense ; he has naturally penetration, acuteness, and a just way of thinking. Ah ! if I had but . . . . . If I could have followed your advice ! . . . . . I should not now have been so unhappy, . . . . . Yes : unhappy I am ; I know all my follies, all my caprices ; I have passed fourteen years without reflecting one moment on the advantages which might have resulted from making a friend of my husband. It is scarcely eighteen months since I began to think about it. Since

which time I have seen him with other eyes ; or, to express myself better, have observed him, listened to him, and have learned with inexpressible surprise, that if I had not loved him before, it was merely from inattention, and because I was taken up with other things. When one is past the age of thirty, and has renounced the airs of coquetry, and finds one's self tired with dissipation, one can do nothing better than love one's husband, if it is in one's power. Whilst I was making these prudent reflections, Mons. *de Limours* quarrelled with Madame *de Gerville*. I felt a joy on that account, which he easily perceived, and I thought he seemed flattered by it. He dined more frequently at home ; did not seem tired when he was there, and every thing went on as I could wish. When all of a sudden he met with Madame *de Gerville* again. They were reconciled, and again he abandoned his house, so that I have not seen him for fifteen days together. This conduct gave me a concern which at first I ingenuously discovered ; but finding Mons. *de Limours* was more perplexed, than afflicted by it, I changed my behaviour, and treated him with the greatest contempt. Bitter reproaches succeeded ; and in short, we now live a thousand times worse together than ever. How much do I feel at this moment the want of such a friend as you are ! . . . . Adieu ! I am too gloomy to converse with you any more at present ; I will not disturb the peace you enjoy. . . . . What a difference is there in our situations ! . . . . You married a man of a most resolute, and even imperious temper. He despised women, and made you suffer the greatest injustice, from his absurd jealousy, at the very time that he had conceived a violent pas-

sion for another woman. You have found means to detach him from your rival, to obtain his esteem, his tenderness, and his entire confidence. And as to me, they married me to a man the easiest in the world to manage, to govern; and I have never acquired the smallest power over his mind. I am not able to separate him even from a woman whom he does not love, and whom in fact he despises. Ah! I see now too plainly we are the cause of our own unhappiness. Had you been in my place, you would have been happy; was I in yours, I should have been the most wretched of all creatures. Adieu, my dear friend! At least pity me, and write to me. Point out to me all the faults I have been guilty of; shew me the consequences of all the mistakes I have made, and which have occasioned me so much grief. I have only a confused notion of them myself, and wish to have them better explained, not on my own account, for my fate is fixed; but that I may better describe to my children those dreadful inconveniences; and that at least the sad experience I have gained may be useful to them; and this will console me for the uneasiness it has occasioned me.

The Chevalier *de Herbain* is at last arrived; he is just as cheerful and as amiable as you ever saw him. He pretends, that in five years we have absolutely changed our fashions, our customs, and our manners; and that he is as much a stranger here, as he should be at Constantinople. The astonishment which he affects at every thing he sees is very droll, and fits very well on him. He has charged me to lay his compliments at your feet, and intends writing to the Baron next week,

## LETTER XXVIII.

*From the Baroness d'Almane to the Viscountess.*

HOW much you afflict me, my dear friend, by the account you give me of your situation. And you wish me to have the cruelty to place before your eyés, all those little faults which have produced such great misfortunes! Did you not make this request to me merely to affect me, and to take from me the power of reproaching you? It would not be the first time you had made use of this artifice. But, my dear friend, do you not know it is impossible for me to let an opportunity escape of preaching to you? Besides, I am well persuaded it is still in your power to change your present uneasy situation, and make it perfectly happy. But for this end you must have great perseverance, and a resolute and determined mind. Your first fault proceeded formerly from your thinking it perfectly genteel, to appear cold and disdainful to your husband; he was very nearly of the same opinion; and this conformity of sentiment ought to have prevented your coming together. With regard to the vexation his attachment to Madame *de Gerville* has caused you, it is but too true, that you in great measure owe it to yourself. I have kept all your letters, and have this morning found one which you wrote me on this subject twelve years ago. It is now by me on the table, and I will copy it exactly.

“ At length, my dear cousin, all my wishes are  
“ accomplished; I have no more fears nor unea-  
“ siness for the future. I am now sure of being  
“ for

“ for ever at liberty, and enjoying my own ease.  
“ Mons. *Limours* is fallen in love with a woman  
“ of intrigue. They assure me it is a real pas-  
“ sion ; that it is natural, and that it is an engage-  
“ ment entered into for life. Now, if you wish  
“ to know the name of the object, it is Madame  
“ *de Gerville* ; and as you do not know her, I will  
“ give you a description of her. She is four  
“ years older than me, consequently is four and  
“ twenty. She is one of those sort of women  
“ who are only handsome three or four hours in a  
“ day, when she is full dressed, and by candle-  
“ light. She has a very disagreeable air of co-  
“ quetry, which consists in making faces, and af-  
“ fecting to be gay. Her character is at least  
“ doubtful ; for it is said, Mons. *de Limours* is not  
“ the first engagement she has entered into of this  
“ kind. At present, she has what is called many  
“ friends, which only means that she keeps a  
“ great deal of company. In short, she is the  
“ most bustling, most visiting, and most intriguing  
“ character in the world. To consider this in a  
“ political light, a woman of her temper and  
“ turn of mind might be useful to Mons. *Li-*  
“ *mours* ; she could transact all his business, and  
“ inspire him with that quickness which he has  
“ not at present ; she would also be a means of  
“ leaving me entirely at liberty. It is true that  
“ Mons. *de Limours* has not hitherto been very  
“ troublesome to me ; but how can I tell from  
“ one minute to another, that he may not, for  
“ want of other employment, take it into his  
“ head to pay attentions to me ! Thank Heaven,  
“ Madame *de Gerville* delivers me from this fear ;  
“ therefore, out of gratitude, I ask her to sup with  
“ me ;

“ me ; lend her my box at the opera ; and let no  
“ opportunity escape of praising her figure, her  
“ dress, her graces, and her wit. Oh ! she has  
“ not obliged one who is ungrateful ! . . . . .  
“ Adieu, my dear cousin ! Quit the melancholy  
“ country where you are, and return quickly  
“ hither ; for I have no real joy without you.”

Well, my dear friend, what say you to this letter ? What a surprising revolution have twelve years made in your ideas, and in your heart ? When our happiness is not founded on reason, how subject it is to decay ! That which transports us to-day, will perhaps torment us to-morrow. You know the poor Countess *de L*—, who, by her jealousy, made herself so insupportable to her husband. She was undoubtedly to blame ; but her fault could not injure her reputation ; nor was it sufficient to deprive her of her husband's friendship for ever. By your shewing so much joy, my dear friend, at what ought to have afflicted you in secret, by seeking after and receiving your rival at your own house, you have fastened the knot higher, which you now vainly endeavour to divide. This imprudent conduct was a breach of decorum, and you know the pretences it gave afterwards to Madame *de Gerville* to blacken and injure your reputation to Mons. *Limours*. But let us say no more of the past. It is the present and the future which ought to engage our attention. It is necessary that we obtain from Mons. *de Limours* the sacrifice of a connection so unworthy of him ; and in which he has not found, even in his fortune, those advantages which you expected. For his attachment to a woman so dangerous, and of such an intriguing spirit, only served to lead him

him into errors, and to render him often suspected, though unjustly ; and it has deprived him of that esteem to which he was otherwise entitled. Is it possible, my dear friend, that with the desire you have to bring him back to you, you should take it into your head to treat him with the greatest contempt ? He might excuse passion, petulance, even though unjust ; but contempt and disdain he can never pardon. Let him see your grief, your concern ; take the first opportunity to explain yourself to him ; then confess your faults with freedom, and this will make him sensible of his. You may not be able to bring about a reconciliation perhaps in a day, but by persevering in this conduct, be assured, before a twelvemonth is elapsed, he will bestow on you all his tenderness and confidence ; since he has nothing of real consequence to reproach you with, and that he certainly has an affection for you. Adieu, my dear friend ! Do not conceal from me any thing which interests you ; and above all, let me know whatever relates to Mons. *de Limours.*

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## LETTER XXIX.

*From the same to the same.*

**I** SEND you, my dear friend, a letter from *Adelaide*. You will certainly be satisfied with the writing, but perhaps will be astonished to find in it many faults in regard to the spelling. But when I give her leave to write to you once a month, I told her I should neither correct her style, nor the spelling. She has just brought me

her

her letter; I have pointed out the faults to her, and she wanted to write another, which I would not allow; so that she saw this sent away with great concern, and waits with impatience till “the twelfth of April,” in the hope of doing better, and of sending you a more complete letter. This is the kind of emulation I wish to inspire her with. Apropos, of writing; I will now tell you the manner in which *Adelaide* has been taught to write, and which I advise you to follow for *Constance*. I have observed, the most fatiguing of all lessons to children, is that of writing; for, indeed, nothing can be more tiresome, than filling a large page by repeating one or two phrases, which contain only two lines. I therefore had extracts taken from some instructing and amusing books, and written by an excellent master; which I made nine or ten volumes of, to serve as copies for my children. Some of them are written large for their first lessons; others in a small hand, for the ages of twelye or thirteen, &c. They are all written on single sheets of paper; and when one volume is finished, they begin another. By this method *Adelaide* finds her lessons agreeable. She is instructed while she writes; and as she finds in the same space a greater number and variety of words, than other children who only copy a single line, she will certainly learn to spell much sooner.

No, my dear friend, *Adelaide* is not already perfect. Nature has formed her with many great faults; and I have as yet only been able to repress them, not to destroy them entirely. She is violent, giddy, and heedless; and of course not able to pay close attention with people of whom she is not afraid. She is impatient, and even passionate; but,

but, like all other children, she knows perfectly well how to submit to necessity ; and being convinced I have the power, as well as the will to punish her, she is extremely submissive to me. She has two or three times played tricks with Miss *Bridget* ; but at last, finding her as inflexible as I was, she now respects and obeys her, as well as me. We should indeed think her perfect, if I did not watch her narrowly, when she is not aware of it. Whilst she is learning to draw, I either write or read ; and frequently surprize her in making faces, or mimicking *d'Ainville* ; and I see clearly, that if I was not present, she would be both impertinent and perverse to him. Nothing is more easy than to prescribe rules to children ; but when you have forced a mind, naturally imperious, to submission, you must never leave her to herself a single moment ; for if you once lose sight of her, you may be sure that she will make herself amends the very first opportunity, for the constraint you impose on her. The more submissive she is with you, the more untractable she will be with others ; and then, instead of curing her of one vice, you only make her guilty of more. The mildness she shews you is only the effect of her submission, and in time will become deceit and hypocrisy ; therefore never put her into hands on which you cannot depend, as well as yourself. Keep your eyes on her, till time, reason, and habit, shall have absolutely changed her disposition. As to other matters, *Adelaide* has many amiable qualities ; she has an extreme sensibility ; is generous ; incapable of envy ; never out of temper ; and certainly has a very good understanding.

It

It is very necessary to accustom children to treat all their masters, not only with politeness, but with respect; for they ought to be persuaded they are under obligations to every body who teaches them any agreeable or useful knowledge. This sentiment of gratitude will do honour to the parents who have directed the education of their children, and they will take their lessons with greater advantage. *Adelaide*, thinking I did not see her yesterday, snatched a pencil out of Mons. *d'Almane*'s hand, which he had not cut quickly enough for her. I obliged her to make excuses for it, which I dictated to her in the most humble terms. This went much against her; and when we were alone, she told me she did not think she owed so much respect to a young man like Mons. *d'Ainville*. But, said I, does he not instruct you in a most agreeable science, and devotes his time and attention to you? He is one of your benefactors. Benefactors! . . . . A master! . . . . Ah! well, but do you not mean to tell me, he is paid for all this, and that it is his duty? If this reason excuses your gratitude, you will be ungrateful to all the world; for example, to me, who in educating you, rewarding, or punishing you, only do my duty, and so you are not obliged to me for it. . . . . Oh! mamma, how can you compare yourself . . . . I know very well, you owe much more to me than to Mons. *d'Ainville*; but there are different degrees of gratitude; and if you are not sensible of small obligations, you are incapable of feeling great ones as you ought to do. If you have no gratitude towards Mons. *d'Ainville*, that which you owe to me will be very weak. This way of reasoning made a very lively impression on

*Adelaide*;

*Adelaide*; and I am very certain she will make a point of appearing to shew great gratitude to *d'Ainville*, in order to convince me, that what she feels for me is without bounds ; she has thus perfectly understood that every body who does not fail in the duties they owe us, contribute all in their power to promote our happiness ; and for that reason, ought to inspire us with gratitude in proportion to the pleasure or comfort they procure us ; and she has even felt, that if these duties are discharged with exactness, our affection ought to be the reward.

And now, my dear friend, I must talk to you a little of our amusements. We have had very brilliant one's this month. For instance, we have acted comedies, and my children were our principal actors. I see here your astonishment. How ! *Adelaide* has played the part of a girl in love ! Does *Adelaide* know already what it is to be in love ? to have a lover, violent passions, &c. . . . . Lay aside your fears, my dear ; *Adelaide* knows nothing of all this. We have played two comedies, in which there is no love, no lovers, no violent passions. But I will explain this riddle to you : you must know I have composed " *Dramas for the use of children, and young persons.*" I have already said, that children must have natural and lively images before them, which may strike their imaginations, touch their hearts, and be engraved on their memories. On this principle I have planned my Work, and these little comedies form a collection of lessons on morality. I have endeavoured to point out those irregularities and faults which are ridiculous ; but in general have avoided representing characters that are truly odious.

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They are very dangerous parts to be acted. Children may forget the unravelling of the plot, and the moral to be drawn from it; and the bad part only will remain in their heads; that is, they will adopt, what they have been taught to represent. I have composed plays, both for *Adelaide* and her brother. The persons in the former are all women, in the latter they are men. This was the more easy for me to do, as I banished love from my theatre; and thus I avoided that familiarity, which the rehearsal of their parts necessarily occasions between actors; which would not agree with that strict delicacy, so becoming young people. It appeared to me, that these new kind of plays might be useful in the education of youth; so that children, by amusing themselves in this manner, may exercise their memory, improve their pronunciation, acquire grace in their speaking, and lose that foolish kind of embarrassment, to which they are so subject. When they have acted a part, filled with goodness, delicacy, and generosity; they will blush to be perverse, or insensible. In short, they will love and cherish that virtue which they see so amiable and so much admired. But I repeat, that it is absolutely necessary the pieces should be composed on purpose; for the best of our theatrical compositions would be dangerous, and at the same time, above the capacity of the most sensible child, who is only ten years of age.

On the first of March, we had two of our little Plays acted; the first was called the *Flaggons*, and the second the *Dove*. Madame *de Valmont* and I, took the parts of the Mother and the Fairy. *Adelaide* performed the principal parts, and two pretty little girls, daughters to Madame *de Valmont*'s waiting-

waiting-women, formed the rest of the company. Four days after, there were two other Pieces performed by the men, at which we were only spectators. The actors were Mons. *d'Almane*, *Theodore*, Mons. *de Valmont*, his son *Charles*, who is thirteen years old, and a most elegant figure ; Mons. *d'Aimeri*, *d'Ainville*, and two of the footmen. The plays were called the *Traveller*, and *The Ball for Children*. *Charles* was very successful in the first, and *Theodore* performed very well in the second. There was great emulation between our two companies. But our best Actors are *Charles* and *Adelaide*, who are really surprising for their age. Our Plays have succeeded so well, that we shall act the same over again in the course of this month. We have a very pretty play-house and a hall, which will hold two hundred people, and which is completely filled by our neighbours, our own family, and the country people round us ; which altogether forms an audience very respectable ; but they treat us with great indulgence. Adieu, my dear friend. If you wish to have tickets for our next performance, let me know. Oh ! I wish you could see our little Dramas. I should enjoy them as much again, if you were here ; and perhaps they would interest you more than you imagine ; for the affecting and innocent graces of infancy add to these inexpressible charms inconsiderable productions.

## LETTER XXX.

*Answer from the Viscountess Limours.*

“ **I**F I want tickets for your next plays, you “ will send me some ! ” Do you think this a pleasant jest ! Or that it is generous in you to insult the grief I feel at being separated from you ? I am very sure I should prefer your childrens’ plays to the greatest part of those amusements I see here ; for instance, to one I was present at yesterday. M. *de Blesac*, gave a very grand entertainment at his country-house. He had collected together about fifteen Ladies of the best quality, the greater part of whom were very young. It began by a beautiful illumination in the garden, and ended by acting two Comedies of a very different nature from yours ; you may have heard of them, because they are reckoned good ones of their kind ; but are so indecent, that ten years ago, no woman of any delicacy would even confess she had read them. Ah, well ! we saw them, at this time, performed before a hundred Gentlemen without any difficulty ; and have even desired M. *de Blesac* to let them be played again. I confess to you, I had no idea of such licentiousness ; and I wondered at the intrepidity of all these young Ladies, whilst the play lasted ; who at other times affect to be so fearful and bashful even on entering a room. If I could, without an appearance of prudery, have declined going a second time, I certainly should have broke my engagement ; for really my mind is not so corrupted as to make me prefer such pieces to French Comedies. Madame *d’Ostalis* was invited to this entertainment, but would not go, which I

very

very very much approved of ; and certainly, had I been only twenty years old, I should have done as she did, in spite of fashion, or the power of example.

I tell you, my dear friend, I make great progress in the English language, and begins to read prose very prettily. Apropos, do you know any thing of an English book on Education, written by *Lord Chesterfield, in Letters to his Son?* This Lord Chesterfield is an impertinent Author. Listen, I intreat you, to the manner in which he treats us, and see whether you could know yourself in this gallant picture, which I translate literally : “ Women are “ only children of a larger growth, they have an “ entertaining tattle, sometimes wit ; but for solid “ reasoning, good sense, I never in my life knew “ one that had it, or who acted or reasoned in con- “ sequence of it, for four-and-twenty hours together. “ A man of sense only trifles with them, plays with “ them, humours, and flatters them, as he does with “ an engaging child. But he neither consults them “ about, nor trusts them with serious matters.” Do you, my dear friend, approve of a father’s giving such an opinion of women to his son ? For, besides, that it is false and unjust, it appears to me to be dangerous ; for the man who despises women, is not more secure from their seductions than others, though he thinks he disgraces himself by loving them. But for the rest, I, who am more just than Lord Chesterfield, agree that there is much good sense in his letters. But I think in general he sets too much value on what he calls the *graces*, and *Bon ton*. When his son first appeared at Paris, Lord Chesterfield was afraid he would conduct himself awkwardly, and takes much more care of his manners than of his

his temper and disposition. His letters are filled with the most trifling particulars relative to the customs of the polite world. He teaches his son how to blow his nose gracefully, tells him never to spill the sauce at table, never to spit before company, and never to laugh loud, &c. &c.—In short, he has such a desire to see his son fashionable, that he even sacrifices his principles to that vain fancy: and he advises him to keep two mistresses at a time! Besides, though he valued himself on his fashionable and polite air, he really was not polite in reality. There are often in his book letters consisting of whole pages written in French. I will only copy one of them. He informs his son, that a woman of fashion undertook to form him, and that one day, in a large company, she said to several people, “ Do you know that I have undertaken this young man, and that you must help to polish him. He must necessarily have an attachment: and if I am judged worthy to be the object of it, we must find him another. But do not go and disgrace yourself by keeping company with opera girls, who will not put you to the expence of sentiment or politeness; but will cost you much more in every other respect. I repeat it, my friend; if you associate with these women, you are lost; they will ruin your health and your fortune: corrupt your manners, and deprive you of that true politeness, which can only be acquired by keeping good company.”

I know very well, that among polite people, one sometimes meets with a Lady, who undertakes to form the minds of young men; but I do not believe they ever expressed themselves in such a manner. Lord Chesterfield's Letters are written in Four Volumes;

volumes ; I have read them through ; you see I attend closely to my English.—I begin also to devote a great deal of my time to *Constance*. I make her read to me, and she gets by heart the little tales you sent me. I keep her almost the whole day with me. In short, I imitate as well as I can all that you do for *Adelaide*. I begin already to reap the fruits of my attentions ; my own house becomes more agreeable to me, dissipation is less necessary to me, and my health is much better. *Constance* is equally sensible, mild, and obedient. But since I have punished her faults, she has told me several lies in order to keep herself from these little corrections which I have given her according to your advice, when she confesses her fault. How must I remedy this ? How prevent a child from telling lies, when she thinks herself sure of not being discovered ? In short, how must I act to make her sensible of the crime of telling lies ? Answer me this in the most particular manner ; for, in my opinion, it is the most important of any thing.

The day before yesterday, I spent the whole morning with *Cecilia*, whose health is almost perfectly re-established. She told Madame *d'Ostalis* and me, that from what she had seen of the world, she found she had no reason to regret it ; that she had formed a very different idea of it in her solitude ; and that her opinion of it was much more pleasing than she had found it in reality. “ I meet with nothing,” said she, “ but constraint and dependence. It is in vain that I seek for freedom and happiness ; I see only ridiculous connexions, opposition, and the most changeable whims and caprices.” She added, that she should return to her Convent with no other concern, than that of

leaving Madame *d'Ostalis* and me, for whom she had a sincere friendship ; which I am sure is mutual on all sides. For these two months past, Madame *d'Oley* has behaved very kindly to her, and values herself much on the affection she has for her. As she sees we pay great attention to her, and that we go to breakfast with her three or four times a week ; she has done the same thing, and has introduced her to several of her own friends. *Cecilia* is so interesting both in person and mind, and has so many amiable qualities, that every one who sees her is charmed with her ; so that in short she is quite the *Ton*, as far as her situation will admit. And the Ladies, who cannot well be jealous of a nun, are all desirous of seeing her, and being acquainted with her ; and they talk of her with a degree of enthusiasm. Which has made Madam *d'Oley* pretend to have a violent affection for her, which does her great honour in the opinion of the world ; but it does not hinder her from hinting to *Cecilia*, that she would not wish her to prolong her stay at Paris. *Cecilia* would have gone immediately, but as her physicians desired her to stay five weeks longer, I have made her promise to remain here till the month of May, though she did it with great reluctance.

Adieu, my dear friend ; do not forget, when you give my dear little *Adelaide* my answer to her letter, to embrace her for me as tenderly as you would do for yourself. And now I think of it, let me beg you to be very particular in giving me your opinion of *Charles*, Madame *de Valmont*'s son. I already know, that he is thirteen year old ; that he has a fine person, and that he acts his part in Comedy to a wonder ; which plainly

proves him to have wit, and graces innumerable. Besides these, what is his disposition, what his birth, and what will be his fortune? I have the most earnest desire to be informed of these particulars, because I foresee, that this little *Charles*, so amiable, so near you, so often with *Adelaide*, may perhaps in the end act a still more interesting part than those you have hitherto given him. Adieu. Remember, if you do not answer me very clearly and particularly on this subject, I shall think you mean to conceal some of your intended schemes from me.

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## LETTER XXXI.

*Answer from the Baroneſſ.*

I AM not at all surprised, my dear friend, that *Conſtance*, who has never been accustomed to be punished for the faults she has committed, should have recourse to telling lies, in order to escape punishment. What can hinder us from doing a bad action, which may be useful and agreeable to us, when we are almost certain we shall never be discovered, and when it does no harm to any other person? Conscience! and pray what do you mean by Conscience? It is a ſentiment in our hearts which, by the remorse it occasions, puniſhes us for our fault. This remorse would have no exiſtence in our minds, if virtue was only a thing talked of: that is, if it was not to receive immortall recompence in another world. In ſhort, if every thing died with us, Heroes, who devote themſelves to

the good of their country, and who sacrifice their own interest for that of others, would act the parts of mad men ; whilst the wisest men would be those who gave themselves up to every passion they could gratify without incurring the punishments inflicted by the law. Conscience is a guide little to be depended on, unless accompanied by religion. Give then to your scholar religious sentiments. Persuade her, that in every moment of her life the Divine Being sees and hears her : impress her mind with this sublime and important principle. Set her the example of piety ; let her often surprize you praying to God, that she may be convinced you find in this duty all the consolation you stand in need of, and that you take pleasure in fulfilling it. Make her admire the works of God, the heavens, the earth, the verdure, the fruits she eats, and the flowers which she gathers, every thing will serve to make her sensible of the power and goodness of God, who has created every thing for our use. Let her learn short, simple, and affecting prayers, of which she may understand and feel the use. I have made some on purpose for *Adelaide*, which she repeats with respect, and in a manner which always affects me ; I frequently speak to her of her guardian Angel, whom I describe to her beautiful, as it is possible to be, crowned with garlands of never-fading flowers, having wings of the most dazzling brightness, and hovering always round her. This sweet and smiling picture affects her heart, and seduces her imagination. She knows, that this charming being is as innocent as he is lovely ; that he despises lies, artifice, gluttony, and passion. And that every good action pleases and delights him. She fears to afflict her good Angel, and when

she

she is very good, she says to me with inexpressible pleasure, God protects me, and my guardian Angel is satisfied with me. I also often speak to her of the evil spirits, made so by pride and ingratitude, whom the Divine Judge precipitated from Heaven to the bottom of the dark abyss, a frightful gulph, the eternal abode of the wicked ! *Adelaide* knows, that this infernal spirit is only employed for our destruction ; that he caused the first fall of man ; and that it is he who prompts us to the crime of failing in our engagements and resolutions ; and teaches us to be vain of the gifts of Nature, which Heaven has bestowed on us. Teach *Constance* all these things in conversing with her ; for this kind of instruction ought to precede the Catechism, which you thought it your duty to teach her, when she was only six or seven years old. Let her know, in reading the Catechism to her, that the mysteries there mentioned are above human understanding. That God has made us *to love him, but not to comprehend his greatness.* That we are too limited in our ideas, to dare to maintain, that every thing we do not understand is false ; since throughout human nature all is mysterious, and appears a prodigy ; and as *Montaigne* says, speaking of our incredulity on indifferent things, “ That it is a dangerous courage and may be attended with bad consequences, besides the absurdity, which it draws one into, of not believing what we do not understand.”

These are the methods I have taken with *Adelaide* to awaken, as you say, her conscience. I have also made use of other means to produce this effect, which perhaps may appear to you to be trifling, but of the success of which I am certain. It is

ridiculous to tell children, that a little finger can inform you of every thing they do in private, because it is both folly and falsehood. But I tell *Adelaide*, when she does not answer me with sincerity, I see it plainly in her countenance ; and in truth it is so, for, when you know children thoroughly, it is very easy to read in their eyes all that they think. By this means she is never tempted to disguise the truth from me, certain that I should always penetrate through it. Besides by means of repeating to her, that I am sure she would not commit a real fault, even if she was certain I should not discover it, I persuade her, and it is really true, that she is not guilty of any without feeling a desire to communicate it to me. The reason for which is very plain, exclusively of those I have already given you ; she thinks this lessens her fault in the eye of Heaven, and is a proof of her confidence in me which she supposes will attach me still more to her. In short, my dear friend, let Religion be the foundation on which you build, or you will have no lasting effects. Endeavour at the same time to give your scholar a command over herself ; you will then succeed to your utmost wishes ; and your labour will not be destroyed by passion, or by bad examples.

I have read those letters of Lord Chesterfield's, and think the remarks you have made on them are perfectly just : but, if he had not been so severe on the women, you would have praised many things in his book, which now you have not mentioned. Is it not striking, for example, that a man like him engaged in the service of his King and country, employed by the State, and given up to ambition, should write such long and interesting as well as instructive letters, to his son, who was only eight years

years old : containing abridgements of Mythology, and History, very well written : and that this correspondence, during the course of twenty years, should be so punctually kept up, and so well connected ? I agree with you, it would have been better for him to have educated his son himself, and not to have been separated from him so long. But this son was illegitimate, which adds more merit to what Lord Chesterfield did for him ; besides this, we find in his Letters many excellent sentiments, a perfect knowledge of the human heart, learning, wit, sense, and sound reasoning. In short I think it ought to be looked upon as a Work valuable in many respects, and an affecting proof of paternal tenderness.

How was it possible, my dear friend, you could go to the entertainment given by Mons. *de Blesac* ? And how could you resolve to see a second performance of such plays ? You, who I always thought was so remarkable for your love of decency ? Is it possible that you could sacrifice your inclination and principles to that trifling and ridiculous fear of being called a prude by people whose reproaches are rather to be considered as praises ? *You are thirty-two years old, and your reputation is established !* In the first place, you are not past the age, in which you may lose it ; and have you obtained it merely to free yourself from your attentions to that kind of behaviour, which ought most to be respected ? On the contrary, reflect that, in order to preserve it, you must act in the same manner you acted to obtain it : and remember, that bad examples set us by those we esteem, are the only ones which are really dangerous. If Mons. *de Blesac* had only invited women of doubtful cha-

raetors, there certainly would not have been a second representation of these plays ; a general cry would have been raised against such an indecency, and they would have been thought what they really were. But when it was known, that some persons of unblemished character were present at these performances, the world would form a very different opinion. Thus you have contributed a great evil, that of rendering indecency less disgusting and less odious : that is, in the general opinion ; for there are still remaining many good minds, who judge of actions as they really are, and not by the people who do them. In short, what an example is this for your daughter, who is going to be introduced into the world ? When you recommend prudence and discretion to her, with the most scrupulous attention to decency and modesty, of what weight will your admonitions be on these articles ? . . . Forgive me, my dear friend, these reproaches made with so much severity. I look forward with grief to all the consequences of your indiscretion, and I am too sincerely concerned to think of my expressions. Friendship betrays, when she flatters on subjects of such importance ; and I had rather run the risk of displeasing you, than conceal from you these useful truths. And, now after having preached a long sermon to you, I am going in my own and Madame *de Valmont*'s name to thank you for all your goodness to *Cecilia* ; and to ask of you a new favour. We read to Mons. *d'Aimeri* that paragraph of your last letter, in which you mention the impression which seeing the world and being introduced to company has made on *Cecilia*. This account gave great pleasure to Mons. *d'Aimeri*, who, since the death of his son,

son, has constantly reproached himself with having sacrificed the unfortunate *Cecilia*. He is so severely punished by this reflection, that it is impossible not to pity him almost as much as the poor victim herself! and the more so, as he speaks himself of this error, never to be remedied, with a frankness and penitence which renders him as interesting as is possible for any one to be, after having committed such a fault. Since his misfortune he has devoted himself to religion; and his piety, which is solid as it is sincere, adds still more to the remorse, by shewing him the injustice of which he has been guilty. He is not ignorant, that *Cecilia* loved the Chevalier *de Murville*; he thinks of her continually. He paints her to himself, as she was when he sent her back to the convent, possessed of all the charms of youth and beauty. This affecting image, he tells me, pursues him in all places, and at all times; and inspires him with such tender pity, that he declares he feels the same affection for *Cecilia*, that ever he felt for Madame *de Valmont*. Nevertheless he has not been able to resolve to see her, since her profession; although he has a thousand times intended it. But he writes to her; he doubles her pension, and sends her every year, in the greatest plenty, every present that can be useful or acceptable to a nun. *Cecilia*, whose gentle heart only wished to attach him to her, feels the tenderest affection for him, which she shews in all her letters to him, and in the most affecting manner possible; which cannot but aggravate the grief and repentance of her unhappy father. She has concealed from him with the utmost caution her bad state of health, and did not inform him of her journey to Paris, till the

moment when she was going to set out. This news overwhelmed Mons. *d'Aimeri* with grief, as well on account of *Cecilia*'s illness, as from the fear which he conceived, lest the slight knowledge she was going to acquire of the world, and the seeing her sister possessed of riches, magnificence, and prosperity, might make her more sensible of her own misfortunes. Your letter, having put an end to these fears, has redoubled his esteem and affection for *Cecilia*. He is no longer torn by remorse, since he finds his daughter is at last contented with her situation; and he now passionately wishes to see her. So that, my dear friend, if you could obtain for us five or six months more liberty for *Cecilia*, instead of returning to her Convent she might come here, and spend the summer; and you would thus be the means of conferring great happiness on her father and Madame *de Valmont*. Adieu, my dear friend! Let me have an answer on this subject as soon as you can. Just as I was closing my letter, I very fortunately recollect ed the questions you asked me concerning Madame *de Valmont*'s son. Since I have not mentioned him to you in a particular manner, you ought to conclude that I had formed no particular scheme for the future. In point of fortune, my daughter has a right to expect a better match: in other respects, though Mons. *de Valmont* does not go to Court, yet he has every qualification necessary to his being presented. His family, though not noble, is very ancient, and cannot be accused of having demeaned itself by improper marriages; a merit, which at this time of day few families can boast; and which at least proves that their ancestors thought nobly. To return to *Charles*, he is really

an elegant youth, and I think I can give you some idea of him by telling you, he is extremely like *Cecilia*. Above all he has great good sense, much sensibility, a lively imagination, and judgement far above his age. Yet he appears at first to be reserved; and is serious in his manner. He has had a very good education from his grandfather. But he is only thirteen years old, and has very strong passions; and if he should lose Mons. *d'Aimeri*, before he comes into the world, he may perhaps disappoint the hopes his friends have conceived of him. Adieu, my dear friend! I intreat you do every thing in your power to send *Cecilia* to us, and you will greatly oblige me.

## LETTER XXXII.

*From the Viscountess, in Answer.*

AH! my dear friend, I am so afflicted, so agitated, that I can only hope to compose my spirits by writing to you. I have just had such a dreadful dispute with Mons. *de Limours*. . . . . I have already told you that I was sure Madame *de Gerville* would endeavour to marry my daughter to whom she chose. . . . . And who do you think they have proposed to me? The son of her friend; of a woman, if possible, still more contemptible than herself: in short, it is Madame *de Valey*, disgraced by so many bad actions, whom they would make the mother-in-law of my daughter! . . . . Mons. *Limours* began the subject by mentioning the family of Mons. *de Valey*, which is indeed honourable, and boasted of his fortune, his person,

&c. &c. I at last replied, But, Sir, do you not imagine, that my daughter has a hundred times heard of the shocking behaviour of Madaine *de Vale*? . . . . We are not obliged to take our mothers-in-law for patterns; and we should often succeed better, if we did not follow the example of our mothers. This ill-natured reply vexed me beyond all expression. The conversation grew warm; and I declared I would never give my consent to the marriage; and that this was my determined resolution. At these words Mons. *de Limours* rose up very coolly, and said, "I was not absolutely fixed on this marriage; but now I shall certainly give my consent to it. I came to consult you about it; but, since you have so perfectly forgot that I am the master of my own child, I ought to prove it to you; and to-morrow you shall be convinced of it." He then went out, and left me in a passion not to be described. Oh! what tyrants men are! and how soon may the weakest of them become formidable even to the most haughty woman! . . . . At length, after having uttered many imprecations against the men, after having wept plentifully, rung the bell for all my women, and taken a glass of orange flower-water, I determined to write a letter to Mons. *Limours*, to acknowledge my fault, and to intreat him to take some time to reflect on so important an affair. He has just sent me an answer by his *Valet de Chambre*, that he will see me to-morrow. This must be submitted to; I must wait for to-morrow with patience and submission; and must receive him with mildness and composure . . . . I am humbled, mortified, and quite confused. . . . . But let us talk of something more pleasing:

pleasing: I have executed your commission, I have obtained liberty for *Cecilia* till the month of January; she is transported with joy, and sets out on the ninth of May for Languedoc; that is, twelve days hence. Adieu! my dear friend. I am not at this time worthy to hold a longer conversation with you. I send for the Baron a letter from the Chevalier *de Herbain*, which he read to me yesterday, and which I thought pleasant enough. Though an Epigram of twelve pages appears to me to be rather long, in other respects it must be owned his Criticism is very just, and at least it is impossible to accuse him of exaggeration.

## LETTER XXXIII.

*From the Chevalier d'Herbain, to the Baron d'Almane.*

MY Voyages are at last finished, my dear Baron; and after five years travel and fatigue I am glad to find myself once more at Paris. But perhaps I shall surprize you by telling you, I find every thing as strange, and as new here, as I should find them at Stockholm or Petersburg; but you shall judge.

I left the men all engaged in gaming, hunting, and their little country retirements. The Ladies I left taken up with the thoughts of their dress, and the arrangement of their suppers: and I find on my return the women all scholars and wits; and the men are every one turned Authors.

Is not this a wonderful change in five years? I did not expect it, I confess to you; and, to give you an idea of my first surprise, I must acquaint you with my adventures the day after I returned. On Monday I went with great eagerness to see my old friend Madame *de Survile*, who, to be plain with you, I always thought, till now, had much more goodness than understanding.

She received me very politely, and told me I was come quite apropos; for, said she, we are going to have a reading to day.... a reading, replied I; and of what?.... 'Tis a Comedy.... And of whose writing? The Viscount's, answered she, coldly. Now, my dear Baron, I must tell you, when I went to Italy, this Viscount was forty years old, and scarcely knew how to write a letter.

Whilst I was seriously reflecting on this matter, I saw near sixty Gentlemen and Ladies arrive at the house.—Thought I to myself, if the Viscount has been so unlucky as to write a Play, the most he would risk would be to read it before five or six of his intimate friends; but surely he is not going to expose himself to the ridicule of this numerous assembly. Madame *de Survile* is in jest, she has a mind to impose upon me. But I see by the Ladies dress and their feathers, that we are going to have a ball. I will humour Madame *de Survile* however, and appear to believe what she says. Presently they brought a large table on which they laid an immensely large green silk bag; good, said I; while they wait for the violins, they are going to play at *Biribi*. I was mistaken, it was Madame *de Survile's* work-bag.

The Ladies sent for theirs, and in a short time every body was at work; very soon after the Viscount

count *de Blemont* is announced ; the Ladies are agitated ; they rise to meet him, and overwhelm him with caresses and compliments ; they seat him in an arm-chair near the table, on which is placed a large decanter of water. They shut the windows, let down the curtains, stop the pendulums of the clocks ; and seat themselves round the Author ; who, with a serious and commanding air, cast an eye of self-satisfaction on his audience, took his manuscript out of his pocket, and began. I thought I was in a dream, but my astonishment was to be much more increased. Unfortunately for me the best places were taken ; and I was separated from the Reader, by half a dozen Ladies, whose repeated exclamations and sobs absolutely prevented me from hearing a single word of the performance. But I could easily judge the prodigious effect of it by the confused murmurs of applause, and the admiration painted on their countenances : I found the Piece was very pathetic, for every body was in tears, and particularly the Ladies, among whom I was placed. They threw themselves back in their chairs, raising their hands and eyes to Heaven, and the youngest Lady of the company was so violently affected, that she was really quite ill ; so that Madame *de Surville*, who was herself in a dreadful state, ran to her assistance, and was obliged to unlace her. The Viscount, accustomed doubtless to produce similar effects on his audience, only smiled, and continued reading. The Play went on in the same manner ; and you may easily conceive the despair I laboured under, at not being able to share in the transports which appeared in every countenance ; I was actually in the situation of *Tantalus*.

When

When the Viscount had finished, the Ladies all rose and got round him ; their passionate gestures, the piercing tone of their voices, the volubility of their speeches, expressed the enthusiasm they were seized with : as for myself, who had nothing to say, having heard nothing ; I was much confused, and did not dare to appear before the Viscount with dry eyes and an indifferent countenance : I therefore made my escape, and went into Madame *de Survillie*'s apartment, where I purposed staying till the Viscount was gone.

But I was destined this day to meet with things unexpected and surprising. The first thing that struck me on entering the room was a desk covered with books and papers. How, said I, a desk with books in Madame *de Survillie*'s apartment ! But, however, since it is so, I shall not be tired with staying here alone. The first book I looked into was *A Treatise on Chemistry*, and, as I am no Chymist, I took up another, which was *A Treatise on Philosophy* ; finding that too abstruse for me, I opened a third : alas ! my dear Baron, it was *A Dictionary of Natural History*. Mortified, and confounded, at not being able to find in the house of a woman (and that woman, Madame *de Survillie*) a book to my mind, I rose from the desk quite out of temper ; when I cast my eyes on a small piece of sculpture, which stood on one side of me. It was an altar, raised to *Benevolence*, and ornamented with verses on that subject, which appeared to be full of sentiment.

Turning about, I perceived another group of figures in marble, still more interesting. It was an altar to *Friendship* ; and one of the figures, which I knew

knew to be Madame *de Surville*, was placing a Crown upon it. Oh, my God! cried I, how little did I know Madame *de Surville*? I was far from thinking her so sensible, so learned, so wise. It is her modesty then which makes her conceal so many amiable qualities, for who that sees, or hears her, would suspect her of possessing them! As I ended this exclamation, the door opened, and in came a large man in black, whom I had observed at the reading, and who, I remarked, was the only one who had neither wept, nor extolled the performance. He had an air of chagrin and mortoseness; but we entered into conversation notwithstanding.

This is a charming room, said I, and the more so, as it gives one such ideas of the person to whom it belongs. The black man shrugged up his shoulders, saying, from whence do you come Sir? From Moscow, Sir.... From Moscow! Oh then you are my man, I will instruct you. This apartment, which you may well imagine to be a Temple consecrated to Friendship, to Study, and Meditation, is only a room for parade; all these books spread on the desk are merely designed for ornament, like china on a chimney-piece. *Moliere* ridiculed the learned women of his age, who were to be sure very absurd, but at least they knew something. Instead of which, ours, at this time, pretend to great knowledge, when they labour under the most profound ignorance. By this discourse I suspected the man to be an original, a kind of satirical, whimsical jester; and I was not deceived in my opinion. But, Sir, answered I, the Ladies of our time, though it is true, they cultivate the Sciences, yet they cannot be accused of pedantry. They make use

use of no learned expressions, they do not make a parade of what they know.... But Sir... once more, they know nothing. That sort of pedantry, of which you are speaking, at least supposes some degree of knowledge. But none is necessary to go and see Experiments in Electricity, to attend a course of Chymical Lectures, and to be infinitely amused by it: in short, to listen with an appearance of understanding, and at the same time by now and then putting in a word, to discover their total ignorance. They have in general received very indifferent educations; and, as soon as they are their own mistresses, they read nothing but foolish pamphlets and plays, which completes the corruption of their taste. They lead the most dissipated lives, and pretend to universal knowledge. They affect to understand painting and architecture. They suppose themselves judges of the principal Opera-singers, or performers, without knowing a note of music. They go to Court, ride on horseback, play at billiards, go out hunting, drive about in their carriages, spend the night at assemblies, or playing at *Pharo*, write at least ten billets in a day, receive a hundred visits, and shew themselves every-where in the space of twelve hours; at Versailles, at Paris, at the milliners, the Minister's levee, the publick walks, at the shop of a statuary, at the market, the academies, the opera, and the rope-dancers; equally delighted with, and applauding *Reville*, and *Jeannot*; *d'Auberville*, and the Little Devil. Doing so many things, pursued he, how would you have them succeed in any one? Nevertheless they are peremptory in their decisions, and particularly Madame *de Surville*, who knows not the measure of a verse; and is even ignorant of grammar, or spelling;

ling; yet she gives her opinion on Works of Literature; and is vain enough to imagine, the letters she writes to her friends will descend to posterity, like those of Madame *de Sevigny*.

With regard to their sensibility, it is true, they have ornaments made with their friends hair; they have galleries with their pictures; they have altars and odes dedicated to Friendship; they are continually embroidering cyphers, they talk only of love, friendship, gratitude, and the charms of solitude, &c. and they every one fancy themselves possessed of superior talents.

But do they employ themselves more in the education of their children? Do they live more retired lives than the women of former times, are they more useful, more sensible, or more amiable, than *des Houlieres*, the *Sevignys*, the *Graſignys*? Have they fewer whims, or are they less extravagant, since they are become so benevolent and so learned? You may compare the irregularities of their conduct to those hypocritical devotees, whose religion consists only in outside shew, who keep an oratory, and relicks, and pray to the Saints, without any love for the Divine Being; who preach to others without correcting their own faults, and blame with great severity those who do not imitate their examples.

During this conversation I stood immovable, struck with indignation and astonishment, but at last broke silence, and said with an ironical air, The Ladies, Sir, are much to be pitied, having so eloquent and so dangerous an enemy in you. I, their enemy! replied he with eagerness. How ill you judge of me; I naturally esteem and love them. You love them, Sir! I should not have suspected

suspected it. Yes, I do love them, and much more than those who flatter and praise them.

In truth, Sir, replied I, they cannot accuse you of flattery or of indifference towards them. I only hate in them, replied he, that which does not belong to them. I would run the risk of displeasing them, to be able to inform them of their real interest. They are formed by Nature to seduce, to interest, and to charm us; and they owe to her those innocent and affecting graces which are embellished with a delicacy of wit and sentiment far superior to ours. If they would give themselves time to reflect, and not prefer to such estimable and natural qualities these vain and ridiculous pretensions, their society would be preferred to any other. They would be able to give their opinions on works of taste; and their approbation would reward the Author for his labours.

May I venture, Sir, to ask you one question? You say you are a zealous friend to the women, and yet you inveigh bitterly against them. It appears to me, in the first part of your discourse you spoke against Plays. But perhaps you may not like them the less for what you said. That is quite another matter, said he; for I am out of all patience with theatrical performances; and have been so for these last two or three years. Before that time, I used to go to the Theatre on those nights when they acted good Pieces; but now the Drama pursues one every-where. We meet with it in all societies, and all families; for every body think themselves able to form a dialogue out of any novel, or even out of a common anecdote; nor suppose it at all requisite, that they should possess any superior talents, or knowledge of the

human

human heart, or even of the Theatre itself; in short, every body is employed in this way; and I have two sisters, who at this time compose Comedies with the same ease, with which two years ago they made purses. I thought, said I, that *plays* were rather out of fashion. Not at all! but, as they have been much ridiculed, the title is banished: but as that species of writing is convenient, they will always subsist, and are composed more than ever; only they call them by the old name, Comedy, which indeed is much better.

What, Sir, was this then a Play, which was read to us to-day? Why, now do you think, replied he, that a man of the world, who has the duties of his station to attend to, who has neither renounced gallantry, ambition, play, nor amusements, can find time to compose a Play that is tolerable? Why had not people in *Moliere's* time this passion for writing? Because this dramatic taste was not then in existence, and because it was thought necessary to have genius, united with deep study, in order to produce a good Comedy; and neither the one, or the other, are now made use of to produce an unformed collection of little romantic facts, full of repetitions, without plot, without character, and wholly void of probability. In short, if *Moliere* had been either a soldier, a magistrate, or a courtier, he would not have presented the world with his Theatrical Works; or, if that employment had been an agreeable one, he would not have produced his *Tartuffe*, or his *Misanthrope*. What causes this universal pretension to wit, which we have all acquired? Half the world write, and read their Works to the other half, who, pleased by this confidence, blindly bestow

stow their approbation: We are to conclude all these Works are perfect; for I have never seen one of them, which fell under the hands of criticism. The hearers are always satisfied; and the success of these readings is certain. Men in these times judge only of living Authors, and scarcely approve of any other, but those whom they can imitate, which insensibly vitiates their taste. This is so true, that the greatest part of those valuable Works which were written in the age of *Louis le Grand*, are no longer esteemed; and if *Telemachus*, or the Poems of *Madame des Houlieres* were new productions, they would be found very insipid. We can no longer perceive the beauties of a deep, though simple plot, of a style pure and natural; and verses, full of harmony, softness, and sensibility; but, devoid of points and metaphysics, appear insipid, and tiresome.

Out of all patience, my dear Baron, with these foolish declamations, I again interrupted my severe critic, and said to him, with some earnestness, What signifies the Sheep, or the Pastorals of *Madame des Houlieres*? Let us come back to the present times: tell me, if you please, what you think of the Viscount's Play? I can only, said he, speak about the first act, as the other four drew me into the sweetest sleep I ever had in my life. Sir, said I, in an ironical tone, this is a new, and remarkable method of criticising indeed.—Alas! it is no criticism; it is the real truth, I assure you. I shall depend much on your opinion, replied I; when I saw sixty people in raptures, and bathed in tears, and you the only person dissatisfied with the performance: you must permit me to conclude your judgment none of the best. Besides I flat-

ter myself that the Viscount will soon have his book printed, and then perhaps the opinion of the Public . . . . Have it printed, interrupted he? Do you think a man of his rank would have his Work printed? Oh fie! this would indeed be setting himself up to ridicule. But, Sir, when a person reads his performance to an audience of sixty persons, I have the honour to inform you, Sir, that, should he be foolish enough to read them to a hundred of his friends, he would not be prevailed on to print them. . . . . But why, Sir? said I. . . . . Ah; why! said he, smiling: it is because we always have a secret instinct in our hearts, which, in spite of false opinions and unjust flattery, tells us when we have done wrong; and this sentiment the Viscount feels too strongly to suffer his Works to be printed.

As he finished these words, I found myself out of all patience; and quitting him very abruptly, I went to rejoin Madame *de Survile*, whom I found alone; and at her toilette. She thought I was gone home, and was surprised to see me. I told her all that had happened to me; and you will naturally suppose, I did not spare the unmerciful critic, who had provoked me so long. He is a Misanthrope, said Madame *de Survile*, and tires one to death; he is dull, tedious, obstinate, full of whims, and besides has not common sense. But, added she, rising, I must go out; when shall I see you again? . . . . To-morrow morning, if you will give me leave. Ah, to-morrow! that is not possible, I am going to the academy, to hear there my brother's speech on his reception there. . . . How, the Marquis *de Solanges* received into the French academy? Yes; and I assure you he has not solicited

cited this honour: you know his disposition. No one will accuse him of having any pretensions; he is simplicity itself. I think you will be very well pleased with his speech. Well then, Madame, to-morrow afternoon, replied I, leading her out. . . . . No, said she; I shall then have my English master. Wednesday, the Author of a new Play, has desired me to be present at the rehearsal. Thursday, I go to Greuse's, to see his Danaë. Friday, I attend some experiments on fixed air; but on Saturday I shall be at liberty. . . . After having given me this invitation, she got into her carriage; and I returned home, amazed and confounded at every thing I had this day met with; in order that I might reflect on it at my leisure.

At seven o'clock I went to the French Comedy; I was in Madame *de Semur*'s box, whom I found just going out, as the fifth act of Rodugune was beginning. She told me she was going to see acted *Les Battus payent l'Amende*, as were also three or four persons who were with her. I asked if it was a Play. At this question they all cried out, What, do you not know *Les Battus payent l'Amende*? Come with us, you will be charmed with it. At these words, they took me with them, and conducted me to a horrid kind of Theatre; but, where the best company in Paris were assembled. They played a little Farce, which was agreeable enough, and was called *Le Cafi des Halles*. I confess I could not enjoy all its pleasantries, because the language was entirely new to me. Yet I found that the actress, who personated the principal low character, performed it in a very superior manner. But the *Battus*, playing *l'Amende*, quite confounded me. The contents of a certain utensil

thrown

thrown on the head of *Jeannot*, the hero of the Piece, produced the most striking effects I ever saw; and the moment when *Jeannot* smells his sleeve, and says, “ ‘tis so,” is not possible for me to describe, as it excited transports and applause for near a quarter of an hour. This Piece has already been acted a hundred and fifty times, and is now as much crowded as on the first day. Let them after this say the French are changeable. I have many other things, my dear Baron, to tell you; but I reserve them till I have the pleasure of paying you a visit; and believe me, they are not less interesting or curious, than those I have already related; but I think it not prudent to trust them by the post.

## LETTER XXXIV.

*Baroness d'Almane to the Viscountess.*

CECILIA arrived here yesterday; I found her exactly what you described, amiable and interesting beyond all expression; and it is very true that her nephew *Charles* is extremely like her. The whole family are come hither to stay a week with us. I was very desirous of being present at the first interview between her and her father; and I never saw any thing which affected me more. Mons. *d'Aimeri* wished for, yet dreaded the moment. He rose yesterday before day-light; and, when he came to our house, I could easily perceive by his countenance what a dreadful night he had passed. After dinner, we got into our carriage, Madame *de Valmont*, Mons. *d'Aimeri*, and I,

in order to meet *Cecilia*. Mons. *d'Aimeri* was pale and trembling, he appeared to labour under the most cruel constraints ; he avoided our looks, and seemed to wish to conceal the dreadful emotions which tore him to pieces. I saw he dreaded the impression which he feared the affecting sight of his poor victim would make upon us ; and that he feared the presence of *Cecilia* would destroy all the compassion we had felt for him. As long as he could flatter himself with our being deeply interested for his sufferings, he spoke of them very freely ; but now, having lost his hope, he endeavoured to dissemble, persuading himself that, in finding his remorse, he should conceal some part of his fault. We had scarce gone two leagues, when Madame *de Valmont*, on seeing a carriage, cried out, "Here comes my sister." Mons. *d'Aimeri* alternately turned pale and red ; and, seeing that Madame *de Valmont* wept, he said to her, with a very angry and tremulous voice, *What, Madam, are you going to act a scene in a Tragedy?* Surprized at the manner in which he spoke, and more so with the wild, fierce, and gloomy air of his countenance, Madame *de Valmont* wiped away her tears, without being able to account for his sudden ill humour. By this time the other coach had stopped. I immediately drew the check-string of mine. Mons. *d'Aimeri*, who was scarce able to stand, got out ; and at that instant I heard a most affecting scream, which undoubtedly must have pierced the heart of Mons. *d'Aimeri*. *Cecilia*, the lovely *Cecilia*, had thrown herself into her father's arms, and fell fainting on his neck. At this sight Mons. *d'Aimeri* saw nothing but *Cecilia* ; he even forgot his grief. Na-

ture resumed all her powers over his mind, a flood of tears fell to relieve him. He called his daughter by the most tender names. He pressed her to his bosom. His knees trembled, and bent under him. He almost lost the use of his senses. Madame *de Valmont* and I wanted to assist him in supporting *Cecilia*. He pushed us away; he snatched a smelling-bottle out of Madame *de Valmont*'s hand which she held to her sister for her to smell to. He would take the whole care of her himself. He watched for the moment when she would open her eyes. He sent every one away from her who came near her. In short, he seemed afraid any one should rob him of her first look . . . . I cannot undertake to paint to you the affecting scene which followed on *Cecilia*'s recovering her senses; and you will much better imagine than I can describe her joy and transport, in finding herself in the arms of her father and sister. The painful and melting sorrow which oppressed her father, the tenderness of Madame *de Valmont*, the share I took in every thing that concerned them all three, and the curiosity with which I observed their emotions. Above all, I admired the delicacy of our amiable *Cecilia*. She saw the remorse which rent her father's heart; and she took the utmost pains to lessen it, by affecting to appear cheerful, by speaking of her taste for solitude, which she says is much increased by the little she has been able to judge of the world. In short, by praising her Convent, and the friends she has there. Mons. *d'Aimeri* eagerly listens to her conversation; it is easy to perceive he tries to persuade himself she is sincere in what she says; and he then seems to be a thousand times more affectionate, as if he

wished to shew his gratitude to her, for endeavouring to justify his conduct in our eyes, as well as in his own.

For my part, I am convinced *Cecilia* has made up her mind, and that she is entirely resigned to her fate. Yet she is only seven-and-twenty years old; so beautiful, and still so young, with a heart so tender, and an imagination so lively, how can one hope she will be entirely free from every kind of regret? . . . . I walked with her a little while alone this morning; we talked of indifferent things, among others of the beauty of the present month. She sighed, and said, to-day is the sixteenth of May; it is just ten years since I took the vows. These words were accompanied with a look which penetrated my heart, especially the words *sixteenth of May*, on which she laid such an emphasis. There was something in her manner which was truly affecting! However, she soon changed the conversation, and seemed to resume her accustomed tranquility. Madame *de Valmont* and I agreed it would be right, if possible, to procure her some kind of amusement for the rest of the day, in order to banish from her mind the dreadful remembrance of the *sixteenth of May*. In consequence of this, we are all to go, after dinner, to the house of *Nichole*, the young farmer, of whom I have spoke to you so frequently. This is one of our favourite airings. The house is really delightful, both from its situation, and the particular neatness with which it is kept; and the garden is well worth seeing at this season. You who love natural rivulets, flowers, and grass walks, would find it a thousand times more agreeable than all those gardens

gardens formed after the English fashion, which are found within the walls of Paris.

My children are both very proud of the compliments you pay to their drawings; and you may be very sure neither of the heads they sent you were ever retouched by their master. We have established a little kind of drawing academy here, which greatly excites emulation in *Adelaide* and *Theodore*. One of our neighbours, who lives only half a league from hence, sends his three children here every day, and *d'Ainville* teaches them to draw. A grand-daughter of one of our servants learns also; and *Charles* attends our little academy at least three times a week. They all meet together in a room appropriated for the purpose, and with *Adelaide* and *Theodore* all receive instruction in this art from *d'Ainville*, who takes great pains to improve them. We call it our academy, and I am the President of it; and have instituted rules which are to inforce application, attention, and silence. This assembly is open to every body who has any inclination to see them at their work; but it is expressly forbid that any one of the pupils should either look at, or speak a single word to those who enter into it.

*Adelaide* does not accompany us to-day in our visit to Nichole. She is doing penance, and I will tell you the cause. *D'Ainville* has taken it into his head, that Miss *Bridget* is like the Emperor *Vespasian*, one of the medallions in the saloon, where the Roman History is represented. In fact there is a striking resemblance; but Miss *Bridget* did not approve this comparison, and is very angry with *d'Ainville*, who, to revenge himself, has made a copy of the Emperor, and placed upon his head a large

bonnet, which has made the picture so exceedingly like Miss Bridget, that it was known by every body in the house. *Adelaide* asked for this drawing, and fixed it against the hanging. Miss Bridget, coming into *Adelaide*'s room this morning, saw this unfortunate profile, which she immediately tore in a thousand pieces; and, taking *Adelaide* by the hand, brought her to me. She was in so great a passion, and stammered in so strange a manner, that she could neither in French nor English make me comprehend the cause of her anger. I begged her to leave me alone with my daughter, and then *Adelaide* explained the whole affair. When she had finished, I said to her, "Is it out of regard to Miss Bridget that you have placed this drawing in your own chamber? At this question *Adelaide* blushed, cast down her eyes, and said very softly, "No, mamma."—Then you did it out of ill-nature?—But why should Miss Bridget be so angry that she resembles *Vespasian*, who was so good an Emperor? You have told me, mamma, that we ought never to mind what people say about our persons.—But, if Miss Bridget should have this weakness, ought you to let her see you ridicule her? I think M. *d'Ainville* much to blame for having continued a joke that was so disagreeable to Miss Bridget; for Madame *de Lambert*, in her Advice from a Mother to a Son, has said very justly, "That the person we attack has the sole right of judging whether we are in jest; as soon as one feels one's self wounded, it is no longer raillery, it is offence." No joke can be innocent that is offensive. Therefore M. *a'Ainville* is much to blame; but can his fault be compared to your's? You, who owe friendship, respect, and gratitude

to Miss *Bridget*, you make her uneasy, *you* laugh at that which gives her pain, and *you* wish to make her appear ridiculous. If you was a few years older, this fault, which is a very serious one, would prove at the same time that you had a bad heart, and that you wanted understanding. At these words *Adelaide* burst into tears.—Ah, mamma, how shall I repair my fault! . . . . In shewing Miss *Bridget* a sincere repentance. However, do not flatter yourself with gaining her pardon in one day. She had a very sincere affection for you; but you have just given her so bad a proof of your disposition, that she is well authorized to doubt whether you have any regard for her, and . . . . Oh! she knows very well that I love her. . . . She cannot read it in your heart; she can only judge from your actions; and you have treated her with so much ingratitude! . . . . But I am only a child . . . . So far she will judge you as such, and not without forgiveness; but she will entertain doubts and suspicions, which you may easily put an end to in time. And, if you was not a child, you would this day have lost for ever the affection both of your mamma and Miss *Bridget* too.—Oh, my dear mamma, you then have doubts of me? . . . . I confess to you, your behaviour has both surprized and afflicted me, I had an opinion so different of you! . . . . I should not have supposed Miss *Bridget* would have been offended at *Ainville's* pleasantry, because that which neither affected her character nor disposition ought never to make us angry. But, as soon as I saw it had had such an effect on her, I should have endeavoured to conceal it from every body; I should have shared her uneasiness, though it was not well grounded; because

because every body who think themselves ill-treated have a right to the compassion of good people. For instance, there are persons who have been allowed, by the negligence of their parents, to take the most absurd and uncommon prejudices; and I know a Lady who fainted away at the sight of a cat! . . . . A cat! . . . . Yes, it was really true: and she was much to be pitied, for two reasons; first for the pain she suffered, and next for having been so badly brought up. I have often thought, if I had had no better education than she had, I should have been guilty either of that, or of some similar folly; and I was not weak enough to suppose I had more sense than she had; on the contrary, I thanked Heaven, who had given me parents that were attentive, sensible, and affectionate; and I pitied this poor Lady from my heart. I ended this conversation, which I have greatly shortened by telling *Adelaide* she must not go with us to Nichole's house, and that for three days she must dine and sup in her own chamber. She received this severe punishment with great composure and perfect submission; for she well knew that the smallest murmur would prolong her punishment; therefore she heard it with as much mildness as concern. I have settled it with Miss *Bridget*, that it shall be at least six weeks before she treats *Adelaide* in the manner she used to do. She is to tell her, she has no anger remaining against her; but that it is impossible to rely on the affection of a person who has treated her with so little regard. And I, on my part, shall tell the poor guilty but repenting *Adelaide*, "you see what this giddiness has cost you." For the sake of a joke, which could only afford you half an hour's diversion,

diversion, you have lost the affection of a person who ought to be very dear to you ; altered the opinion which I entertained of you ; and in short have rendered yourself suspected by every body ; and have brought on yourself a punishment, which is to last three days.

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## LETTER. XXXV.

*From the same to the same.*

I HAVE been a long time, my dear friend, without writing to you ; but, since my last letter, I have been witness to a most melancholy scene, the dreadful consequences of which, affected me so much, that I have not been in a capacity to inform you of what you will be very anxious to hear, when I inform you it is relative to the unfortunate *Cecilia*. Alas ! how much is she to be pitied at this time ! . . . And, you shall judge, whether, at any time of her life, she was more worthy of exciting your compassion. I told you in my last letter the expression which escaped *Cecilia* on the subject of her profession, which was made on the sixteenth of May (a day, which has now proved itself doubly fatal to her repose !) and that we purposed, in order to divert her thoughts from this melancholy reflection, to carry her to the house of *Nichole*. We set out about five o'clock in the afternoon, Mons. *d'Aimeri*, Mons. and Madame *de Valmont*, *Cecilia*, M. *d'Almane*, *Charles*, *Theodore*, and myself, all in one carriage. I perceived *Cecilia* took very little share in the conversation,

but she appeared to take great pleasure in admiring the beauties of the country, and the different prospects which offered themselves to her view. A sigh now and then escaped her, and seemed to say, how happy are those who are not deprived of the liberty of contemplating so beautiful a sight!

.... When we came within a short distance of *Nichole's* house, Madame *de Valmont* propos'd our walking the rest of the way, in order, she said, to surprise these good people in the midst of their employment. We got out of our carriage, and, having crossed a large meadow, and passed through a double row of willows, we arrived at the house. This little habitation is thatched with straw, and is situated in the midst of a tolerably sized garden, surrounded by a hedge of hawthorn in full bloom. The fruits were beautiful, the prospect delightful, the air was perfumed with sweets: little streams of transparent and running water crossed in serpentine forms the walks of turf, which were full of violets and wild thyme. Every thing conspired to make this little country dwelling the most delightful habitation in the universe. When we got to the house, *Theodore* went forward and opened the door, and we all went in. We found the wife of *Nichole* seated between her mother and her husband, with her youngest child in her arms, her eldest girl was on her knees before her, caressing her little brother, who was standing with his face carelessly leaning on his father's shoulder. We could have wished for a few minutes to have continued viewing this delightful picture of conjugal love and happiness. But, as soon as the family perceived us, they rose up; and the young woman sent her husband to gather us some flowers.

The

The good old woman went to get some milk and cream, and to spread the table. Whilst this was doing, we admired the order and neatness of the house, took notice of the children, and the farmer's wife talked to us of her happiness and her affection for her family. Her husband soon returned with a basket filled with nosegays. They presented us with fruits, flowers, and the produce of their dairy. And, while these good people were anxiously and busily employed about us, Mons. *d'Aimeri* perceived that *Cecilia* was no longer seated near him. He found her retired to a distant corner of the room: he approached her; the unfortunate girl turned her head..... He looked at her; she was pale and trembling, and her face was bathed in tears; she would have spoke, but her sobs stifled her. Madame *de Valmont* ran to her; and *Cecilia*, in the utmost confusion and despair, said, as well as she could, but in a voice scarcely intelligible: Oh, my sister, take me from hence or I shall die..... Madame *de Valmont*, as much astonished as afflicted, was wholly at a loss to penetrate the cause of *Cecilia*'s present unhappy situation. Her father had but too easily guessed the truth; and, not being able to support the dreadful sight, he on a sudden took *Charles* by the hand, and drawing him along with him; he went out of the house in great displeasure. Monsieurs *d'Almaine* and *Valmont* followed him with the intention of overtaking him, and of returning back to the castle on foot. At length we took *Cecilia* from this house which had proved so fatal to her, and got into our carriage; she did not speak a word the whole way, but rested her head on her bosom, and her eyes were half closed. Penetrated with

grief at her situation, I attempted to take her hand and kiss it; but she kept it still, with a gloomy pensive air, and remained motionless, regarding nobody. One of the most fatal effects of despair is that of hardening the heart, and making it insensible of the compassion it inspires. However, *Cecilia's* is naturally so tender, that she soon repented the indifference she had just shewn me, and, when we arrived at the castle, she pressed my hand, and embraced me with the greatest tenderness. As soon as I left the two sisters alone, and at liberty to converse with each other, *Cecilia*, guessing the curiosity of Madame *de Valmont*, threw herself into her arms; saying, "Learn, my dear sister, all that has passed in my heart, and that it is pierced with a dart which death only can remove! . . . . I saw in that cottage the picture of happiness, which I could not keep myself from envying; in that moment a vile sentiment of bitter jealousy poisoned my mind! I saw you smiling at the felicity you was witness to. But this sight, so pleasing in your eyes, served only to make me more sensible of the horror of my destiny, and to convince me still more of the extent of the cruel sacrifice I have made. Alas! this woman is in the midst of her children, in the arms of a tender mother and beloved husband! . . . . And I, unhappy as I am, was deprived of my mother almost at my birth, banished by my father, torn from all I loved, condemned to oblivion, to slavery, and forced to renounce the sweetest sentiments of Nature! . . . . Oh! my sister, whither did you carry me? Ought you to have shewn me this delightful image of happiness, which I am so wretched,

“ wretched, that I can never enjoy or even hope  
“ for ! . . . . Ah ! why was not I born in an in-  
“ ferior rank, like this happy woman ? . . . . I  
“ could also have loved . . . . This unfortunate  
“ heart would have been as innocent, as it is af-  
“ fectionate ; and then, remorse, frightful re-  
“ morse, would have been unknown to me, and  
“ all those sentiments, which now destroy me,  
“ would have contributed to my felicity ! ”

Madame *de Valmont* could only reply with her tears to these affecting and just complaints. But, when she saw *Cecilia* appear a little more calm, she seized that moment to say every thing to her, which her understanding and her affection dictated. *Cecilia* heard her with mildness and attention, and expressed the most anxious fear of afflicting her father ; she promised to banish these dreadful reflections, if possible from her mind, and endeavour to submit to her destiny, with the resolution and fortitude she had hitherto shewn. When Mons. *d'Aimeri* arrived, she went to meet him, she had even resolution enough to talk to him, almost jokingly of the scene they had been witness to, and attributed it only to her being suddenly taken ill : Mons. *d'Aimeri*, who was brought back by Mons. *d'Almane* almost in despair, began to recover himself, and to believe at least, that the impression she had received would soon go off again.

At night she sat down to supper, eat as usual, and talked a great deal. She put such a constraint on herself, that every one, except myself, was deceived by her. I had much rather have seen her melancholy and silent, than so lively and animated. I was convinced she did great violence  
to

to her feelings; and the redness which coloured her cheeks, the vivacity which appeared in her eyes, and a certain eagerness that I perceived in all her motions, made me certain she was then in a fever. We went to bed soon after supper, and I had not been there above an hour, when I headt somebody knock gently at my door. I rose instantly, and found it was Madame *de Valmont*, who, drowned in tears, told me her sister had a violent fever, and was in a frightful delirium. I immediately sent to Carcaillonne for a physician; who did not arrive till five in the morning, at which time we called Mons. *d'Aimeri*, not chusing before to disturb his rest, and dreading the effect which the sight of *Cecilia* in such a situation would have on him; for, besides her dangerous illness, the unhappy *Cecilia*, in her delirium, was continually repeating the name of the Chevalier *de Murville*, and with tears intreating him to come *once more to see her before she died!* At other times, when she seemed less distracted, she asked her sister what was become of him; and, obtaining only tears for answers, she cried out in the greatest terror, *He is dead, he has been killed, and, no doubt, my father has done it!* . . . . At these words, the most dreadful convulsions agitated and disfigured her countenance, and seemed as if they would put an end to her miserable life. In short, while she was under these shocking deliriums, she discovered all the sentiments and ideas which she had concealed in her bosom for these ten years past. You may judge of the state of her father on hearing them. It affected him so deeply, that he appeared quite insensible. Grief, when carried to the highest excess, seldom discovers itself by any outward appearances.

pearances. It is silent, it overwhelms, it oppresses, and, not hoping for consolation, it avoids making complaint. At present the physician declares that *Cecilia* is in very great danger; and that it will be necessary, the moment she recovers her senses, for her to receive the Sacraments. On hearing this, Mons. *d'Aimeri* turned pale, and cried out, "recover her senses!.... And, if she 'should die without recovering them!".... It is impossible to give you any idea of the horror and affliction which was painted on his countenance, when he repeated these words..... The unhappy man, penetrated with the sublime truths of religion, saw himself at this moment the author of his child's death, and perhaps the cause of her eternal condemnation!..... Terrified, and almost out of his senses, he sent for a Priest, and made him stay in an adjoining room!..... In the evening, *Cecilia* all at once became more calm, and by degrees perfectly recovered her senses. Mons. *d'Aimeri* approached, and embraced her; *Cecilia* looked around her with astonishment, and said, I have been very ill.... Am I out of danger? We do not fear for your life, we only fear for your peace of mind, said her father, and we have sent for a Priest!.... A Priest!.... Ah, am I in a situation!.... No, I will not see him. .... How, my child, reflect on your danger!..... Ah, my father, if you knew my heart!..... No!.... I have lost all hopes of pardon. At these words, Mons. *d'Aimeri* trembled; and looking at his daughter with a countenance, in which terror, astonishment, and tender affection were united: oh! my daughter, cried he, you pierce my very soul!.... And, what have you

to fear? . . . . Be composed, God always pardons involuntary errors . . . . No; you have nothing to reproach yourself with . . . . You, alas! are an innocent victim; and I am the guilty! . . . . Yes, continued he, throwing himself on his knees, thy unhappy father ought alone to experience such terrors. It is he that will be punished for every sigh which escapes thee, and for the despair which fills thy broken heart; in short, every error of thine will fall upon my guilty head. As he finished these words, *Cecilia*, almost choked with her tears, threw both her arms around her father's neck, and laid her face close to his. Oh, have done, said she, with this fatal discourse. Lament no more on my account. My father, my dear father, you love me; you have made amends for every thing. Pardon a moment's distraction . . . . This heart, returned again to itself, shall be devoted only to God and to you. . . . . The Priest . . . where is he? Let him come. . . . . Assure yourself, my father, he will find me full of confidence and resignation . . . . It is upon this dear hand, my father's hand, that I now swear it . . . . Compose yourself . . . . If you will snatch me from death . . . I will be content to live . . . . I will live for your sake. . . . . When *Cecilia* had ended these words, she addressed herself to Madame *de Valmont*, to send her Confessor to her, and we all left the room. She received the Sacraments the same day; and the night after she slept tolerably, and in four-and-twenty hours was out of danger; so that by the end of the week she was able to return home to Madame *de Valmont*. She has now been gone a fortnight, in which time I have seen her frequently. She is very much altered, and extremely thin.

But

But she says she is very well. You can perceive no alteration in her disposition. She is perfectly cheerful in company. But I know her resolution, and the command she has over herself so well, that I greatly fear she is in a much more dangerous state than people imagine. Mons. *de Valmont* alone has recovered his cheerfulness, since *Cecilia* has been growing better; not that he has an unfeeling heart, but because he does not yet know the real cause of his sister's illness, or the affliction of Mons. *d'Aimeri*. He never supposed any other reason for *Cecilia*'s being ill at the cottage, than that she had a violent pain in her stomach. And it never entered into his head, that the presence of *Nichole* and his wife could make her weep or give her a feyer. With this superficial manner of viewing things, you may easily imagine, that there are many circumstances in which he appears equally imprudent and troublesome: so that, for this last fortnight, Mons. *d'Aimeri*, Mons. *d'Aimane* and I have been provoked with him a hundred times, without his ever being able to guess the cause. As to Madame *de Valmont*, she never appears to take any notice of his folly. I admire her conduct extremely in this respect. She takes the only method which a polite and sensible woman ought to follow, which is that of not appearing to be distressed, at what such a husband does that is wrong; in this case, disimulation is justifiable, and to appear blind is also a proof of merit, which demands respect. So that, though we often were very angry with Mons. *de Valmont*, we never expressed it before his wife. Every body respects the good opinion she appears to have of him, therefore she never has the pain of seeing him ridiculed or ill treated; for doubtless, if she appeared to suffer

by

by his absurdities, every body would take the liberty of laughing at him, and even before her face ; and she would every day be told how ridiculously he behaved. Thus it is, that women take away all their husband's consequence, and at the same time lose great part of their own. Adieu ! my dear friend, let me know if your daughter's marriage with Mons. *de Valey* is still in agitation ? From your last letter I flatter myself the treaty is at an end ; for, if Mons. *de Limours* promised to take time and reflect on it, I doubt not but you will easily prevail on him to renounce it.

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## LETTER XXXVI.

*The Count de Roseville to the Baron d'Almane.*

I THANK you, my dear Baron, for the obliging reproaches you made me on my long silence ; I have not been ill, nor have I had any particular business. But I wished to write you a very long letter, and I have not had two hours at my own disposal for these three months past. I can neither rely on a Sub-governor nor Preceptor, therefore never quit my pupil. It is true, I get up two hours before him, and I go to bed an hour after him ; but in the morning I prepare his lessons for the day, and in the evening I write a very exact journal of every thing he has done amiss throughout the day, and enumerate every opportunity lost or neglected, when he might have done a good action or have said an obliging thing. As the greatest

greatest part of his faults are committed before company, I very seldom take notice of them at the time, which makes him often flatter himself, not having been reproved throughout the day, that the journalist will have nothing to say ; I leave him in this uncertainty when he goes to bed : so that he wishes for to-morrow, that he may be satisfied. As soon as he gets up, and is dressed, which he is very little time about, as his curiosity makes him eager to hear, he comes into the room and asks me for my journal, I give it him, and he reads it aloud, which I insist on his doing from beginning to end, and without making any comments as he goes along ; for it is a very right thing to accustom him to read an account of his own faults. I then read it a second time, and we communicate to each other the reflections we have made upon it. Thus I not only familiarize him to hear the truth, but to desire it, to like it, and to listen to it quietly, without its having been at all disguised. That you may judge of the manner in which it is presented to him, I will transcribe the journal of the day before yesterday. This is it :

“ My Prince at dinner appeared absent, and  
“ embarrassed with the persons who made their  
“ Court to him. He contented himself with asking  
“ them two or three questions, without waiting  
“ for their answers. The Prince imagines, that  
“ the moment he smiles every body must be de-  
“ lighted with him : but an affected smile, which is  
“ nothing more than grimace to which he has used  
“ himself, would become very pleasing and agreeable,  
“ if he had really the desire of being so, and wished  
“ to make himself beloved, without which it ap-  
“ pears tiresome and ridiculous. The Prince has  
“ forbid

“ forbid *Roland*, the son of one of his valets; to  
“ touch any of books which are in our Study, and  
“ this morning, walking on the terrace, we saw  
“ young *Roland* reading very attentively a large  
“ book bound in red Morocco; the Prince said to  
“ me, I lay a wager, *Roland* has got the book of  
“ your writing which you gave me yesterday. I  
“ am sure I know it again. Do not judge too  
“ rashly, I replied; let us be certain of it before  
“ we accuse him; remember, that in losing your  
“ favour this man will lose his fortune, and con-  
“ sequently you would be equally cruel and un-  
“ just, were you to judge him merely by ap-  
“ pearances. The Prince on going home looked  
“ for this book, and could not find it. He sent  
“ for *Roland*, and questioned him about it. *Roland*  
“ blushed, turned pale, and was confused. How-  
“ ever, he protested he had not touched the Prince’s  
“ book, and that which he had been reading was  
“ sent him by a relation, to whom he had just  
“ returned it, as he was then going back to his  
“ own province. This account appeared to the  
“ Prince to be nothing more than a made up story.  
“ *Roland* was treated as a deceiver, and was  
“ banished the apartments; I suffered this sen-  
“ tence to pass in order to convince the Prince of  
“ the consequences of his petulance and rashness.  
“ But now I inform him, that the poor disgraced,  
“ banished, despairing *Roland*, is entirely innocent.  
“ Every thing he said is exactly true. It was I,  
“ who this morning took the book, in order to add  
“ some notes to it. So that the Prince has cruelly  
“ and falsely accused the unfortunate *Roland*. It  
“ is true, that appearances were against him, but,  
“ when the happiness of a man is in question,  
“ ought one to judge by appearances? Before you  
“ had

“ had determined on any thing, you should have  
“ enquired the name of his relation ; you should  
“ even have sent into the country, and have  
“ written to him. In short, reason, equity, and  
“ humanity ought to have put the Prince on  
“ making the most particular enquiries into the  
“ truth of this affair.”

I promised you in my last letter to give you my opinion, what are the first principles which ought to be instilled into the mind of a Prince, and what are the chief qualities he ought to be possessed of. I think one cannot too soon inspire him with sentiments of true religion, of the most tender humanity towards his people, an aversion to flattery, and an inclination for truth ; and that it is essentially necessary to make them early accustomed to application ; and never to judge lightly, or in a hurry, either of good or bad actions.

Yesterday, when the Prince had turned away *Roland*, he told me he had a great desire to put another young man named *Justin* in his place ; and he added, that he was certain of his being perfectly steady, exact, and prudent, “ And how have you “ acquired this certainty ? Have you studied the “ character of this young man ? Have you put “ him to any proofs ? . . . . Oh ! no, but . . . . “ But pray then do not say you are certain, since “ you cannot bring any proofs ; this is talking “ like a child.—You do not then believe the “ good qualities of *Justin* ? Who, I ? I do not “ say that I know nothing of him, I never ob- “ served him ; I am entirely ignorant whether he “ is worthy or unworthy of your confidence ; for, “ as I am not so weak as a child, I never form “ an opinion of persons I do not know. But  
“ every

“ every body speaks well of *Justin*.—One ought  
“ certainly to be prejudiced in favour of a person  
“ who is so universally well spoken of, and that of  
“ itself is a sufficient foundation for your esteem;  
“ yet it would be absurd to depend on that, and to  
“ grant him your entire confidence merely from  
“ report. No man of sense will do this, till he  
“ has proved it by his own particular observation.  
“ Never say then, my Prince, I believe, or I do  
“ not believe such a thing, because I have been  
“ told so, or because it is probable; which is  
“ only the language of credulous, trifling, and  
“ ignorant people. Always learn to judge for  
“ yourself, and never depend on the opinion of  
“ others.”

It is impossible that a Prince, thus accustomed from his infancy to examine into the truth of every thing, and not to believe common report, should not acquire at the same time a just way of thinking and acting, together with that kind of judgment which is so necessary to our gaining a knowledge of the human heart. Thus you see how important this principle is; yet it can be of no use to a Prince who is indolent, and will not learn to think for himself. Idleness is more pernicious than even ill-nature, or want of understanding. It is therefore an essential point to use every means to preserve a young Prince from this so dangerous and common a fault, by accustoming him very soon to examine into every thing himself; for it would be a thousand times better he should be distrustful, and have an active mind, than be credulous and indolent. I would also use my utmost endeavours to cure him of that bashfulness and fear which are but too frequently observed

served in persons of his rank, and which can only be conquered by appearing and speaking frequently in public, and by a desire of appearing amiable. The Prince receives visits twice a day; I never direct him what to say. But, during the time which his company are with him, I fix my eyes on him, and observe him strictly, in order to familiarize him to it. If he speaks ungracefully, or makes use of improper expressions, I reprove him gently, either when we are alone, or in his journal. But, if he does not speak at all, I shame him before every body, and ridicule him in the most striking manner. By this means I engrave a very good principle in his mind, that it is much better to treat your friends with civility, though you do it in an awkward manner, than not to take any notice of them; because at least one should suppose you meant to be polite, however you might fail in the attempt. I have observed that Courtiers are afraid to shew their affability, for fear of appearing to want ease and grace in their manner, and had rather pass for unpolite, absent, or proud, than be accused of awkwardness. Nevertheless nothing can be more awkward than this way of acting; for, if one tried for six months to get the better of it, one should very easily acquire those graces which are so highly valued. We should gain the reputation of being as obliging as amiable; and we should obtain the esteem of every body. "Few  
" Princes, says the Abbé *Duquet*, know what  
" may be done by a kind word, a look, an air of  
" complacency; and few are acquainted with the  
" effects of the slightest marks of inattention, in-  
" difference, or coldness. But a wise Prince will  
" know how to distinguish both, and will never  
" mistake

“ mistake in the use he means to put them to. He  
“ will give to his people every mark of affection  
“ and goodness. But, besides this general method  
“ of treating them, he has another which he  
“ must proportion to their birth, their employ-  
“ ment, their services, and their merit. He does  
“ not treat all alike without distinction, nor is he  
“ prodigal in rewarding those who have not de-  
“ served it; neither does he disgrace those who  
“ ought to be treated with distinction.”

The same Author says, “ He should wish that  
“ a Prince might have eloquence. Virtue and  
“ truth, says he, would receive new lustre from  
“ it; it would support a just sentiment; it would  
“ persuade, instead of commanding; it would  
“ render every thing amiable which he proposed;  
“ and he would be listened to in his Councils with  
“ admiration, &c.

Nothing can be more true than this; but, if  
your scholar absolutely is without understanding,  
do not aim at making him eloquent, for you will  
only render him pedantic, talkative, and absurd.  
As to mine, he shews as much sense as it is pos-  
sible for a boy of ten years of age to have. I al-  
ready exercise him in speaking in his turn without  
preparation. Every day, after dinner, the persons  
employed in his education meet together in his  
apartment, and every one is obliged to repeat two  
histories: one of invention, the other is either  
taken from Ancient or Modern History. Every  
fault in the language or pronunciation is a forfeit,  
and draws on a punishment which makes this an  
amusing game to the Prince, especially as the sub-  
governor and myself are never spared. We let  
nothing escape us; if I let fall a single note, or a  
reflection

reflection which is not perfectly just, the attentive preceptor immediately interrupts me, and with great politeness makes me remark my error. Sometimes I do not submit at the first word, but defend myself with mildness, give them my reasons, and explain myself. The Prince listens attentively to this dispute, which is very interesting to him, as he is at a loss to know whether I shall be punished or not; and at the same time he profits by the argument, and sees at the same time a perfect model of the manner in which one ought to dispute; for we always keep our temper, and argue with great politeness. In short, we support our opinions as long as we think proper, and, when we find it of no consequence, we give it up with great good humour and freedom, which pleases every body present. The Prince for these three months past has preferred this diversion to any other; and he reaps all the advantage from it we can desire. He has learned to express himself much more fluently, and he relates his two histories in a surprising manner, considering his age. With regard to the kind of instruction a Prince should receive, I think he ought to have a general knowledge of History, and particularly that he should understand that of his own country. He should have a clear and distinct idea of the Constitution of the State which he is to govern, that he may know the extent of the rights which he will have over them, to the end that he may support them, and not usurp theirs. I would have him acquainted with every art of Administration, that, when his education is finished, he should know as much of Military arts, as Books and Masters could teach him; and he should not content himself with only superficial

perficial notions of Navigation or Sea Engagements. In short, I would have him well-acquainted with the riches and resources, the necessities and the strength of his kingdom. This you will tell me is requiring a great deal. However, I am of opinion there is nothing superfluous in all this. But it is true, that, if we join to it all the different studies of music, drawing, and ten years of Latin, what I propose would be impossible. With regard to languages I have adopted your method. He learns the living ones by custom; and will only be taught Latin when he is from twelve or thirteen to fifteen or sixteen years old. He shall learn enough of drawing and geometry to enable him to make plans. But he shall never learn a note of music. I would not have him without learning, because it will be right for him one day or other to protect and countenance men of letters; but books of Morality and History will form our principal and most serious study.

I am quite of your opinion, that it is important to inspire Princes with sentiments of benevolence and compassion for the unhappy. All you say on the subject is as true as it is affecting; but, as you observe one cannot teach one's scholar to be charitable by lessons or phrases, it is in this matter above all, that one should convince them by producing examples. My young Prince has not bad heart, but he has no great sensibility; besides the words poverty and miserable are scarce understood by him, because he is too young and too giddy to have any idea of things so melancholy and which he has never been witness to. But he has understanding, self-love, a lively imagination and a good temper. It is requisite therefore that

his vanity should be directed to objects worthy his attention, and to make him feel compassion, which is a sentiment he is almost a stranger to, merely because it has never been awakened in his heart, by presenting to him affecting pictures of distress which will excite it. I have been some time preparing a scene of this kind for him as new as it is affecting; and which I am certain will never be effaced from his memory. You shall have the particulars of it in my next letter; for even to you I have reserved the pleasure of a surprise. Adieu! my dear Baron, I have no journal to write this evening, my young Prince has behaved admirably all this day; and I have received double pleasure from it, as it has procured me the pleasure of conversing with you.

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## LETTER XXXVII.

*The Baroness to the Viscountess.*

IT is true, my dear friend, as you imagined your letter would surprize me, your daughter's marriage with Mons. *de Valcy* is not concluded; but I see clearly it will be, and that Mons. *de Valcy* will get a title. . . . . And so you consent to receive him at your house, and you want to be acquainted with him, although you already know that he is a gamester and a coxcomb, which appears to me to be sufficient knowledge of him. In short, you are almost reconciled to Madame *de Gerville*, who you say has behaved very well on this occasion by making Mons. *de Limours* treat you with respect and attention. . . . . But cannot

you see that these pretended regards are only shewn with the desire and even certainty of winning you over to their party? This marriage should have been disapproved, because your daughter, with the name she bears, and the fortune she will have, ought not to be dazzled with a fortune; and, besides that, it is very shocking to give your daughter to the son of a woman of bad character, and who is himself but a very inferior kind of man. I know very well that Mons. *de Limours* is master; but, with prudence and resolution you might have dissuaded him from his purpose; or at least, if he had persisted in his design, by yielding with repugnance and concern, you would have made Madame *de Gerville*'s part appear truly odious; you would have had a right never to admit her to your house; and you would have discovered her behaviour to the world in general; and no one could have reproached you with having sacrificed your daughter through vanity or weakness.

Though you have told me some time since you are infinitely more satisfied with *Flora* than you used to be, yet I cannot conceal from you that the description you give me of her disposition afflicts me much. You allow that she might have had a better education. But that which comforts you is exactly that which gives me most concern. She has no superior qualities, nor any very great faults, except that of extreme vanity; and you are sure she has no strong passions. Ah! how easy and frequent it is for people to be led astray without having violent passions! and this it is which disgraces us most. Believe me, in general, the vanity of little minds causes as much ill conduct, as is frequently attributed to those who are possessed of the strongest passions.

passions. A woman, prepossessed with the ridiculous idea that the happiness of her life consists in surpassing all others in charms and in beauty, sacrifices every thing to this extravagant fancy ; at first her delicacy, and afterwards her honour. You will see in her all the fury of jealousy, the height of rage ; and, in short, you will think she is agitated by a violent passion ; but these are great events produced by little causes. There is nothing in her heart. All the evil arises from the idea which solely employs her thoughts, that the felicity of a woman consists in being beautiful and admired. You will often meet with this principle. You know the Count *d'Orgeval*, he is said to have violent fiery passions, which education has not been able to conquer, or even moderate. The world believes him wicked, dangerous, and an Atheist. Nothing of this is true. He has very little sense, though he knows how to express himself with tolerable ease and grace ; he has spent his youth in bad company, surrounded by vile flatterers, whose interest it was to corrupt him ; they praised him for the facility they pretended he had of saying *bon mots*. This made him impudent. They praised his good fortune and inclination for gallantry ; and this made him a coxcomb and a debauchee. They admired the strength of his mind ; and this made him be looked on as an Atheist. The truth is, that he is vain, weak, and confined in his notions, and the desire of being celebrated has ruined him. This desire is only dangerous to fools and people of moderate understandings. But happy is the noble and sensible heart that is inflamed by such a sentiment ! It then changes the name as well as the motive. It

is no longer vanity or self-love ; it is an enthusiastic passion for glory ; it is, however, founded on the same principle, but the one produces nothing but vices, the other heroism and virtue. *Flora* now reaches her sixteenth year, and so young, so little formed, you are going to marry her, and to give her in your place as a mother, a woman you have so much reason to despise ! . . . . Ah, my dear friend ! at least wait a little. Think how much the virtue, the happiness, and the fate of your daughter depends on this choice, which you are going to make. What a terrible and affecting day is that in which a mother conducts her child to the altar to put her into the hands of a stranger, and give her a master who perhaps knows only the right he has over her to make an ill use of it. In short, if he becomes a tyrant instead of a friend and protector, or, if wholly neglecting the mild and sacred authority her parents have given him over her, he abandons to herself her whom he ought to lead, to advise, and to govern. The parents alone are answerable for the misfortunes and ill conduct which may result from such an ill-concerted union. But you will say, with such fears one may hesitate for ever, and never be able to establish one's daughter. Ah ! do not marry her to get rid of her, neither for interest or ambition ; and be first certain that the choice you will make will insure her happiness.

## LETTER XXXVIII.

*Viscountess to the Baroneſſ.*

YOUR letter has affected me exceedingly; I am perfectly convinced of the strength of a part of your arguments. I will delay as long as I possibly can the settling of *Flora*; and I flatter myself the choice I shall make will render her happy. But I must confess the manner in which you have described marriage makes me regard it as a cruel and heavy bondage. I should fear to let her see it in such a light; I should also fear to deceive her, by pointing out to her such severe duties of obedience as do not exist. But, to grant you something, I will acknowledge she should not aspire to the government of her husband; let them, however, at least be on an equal footing. Love, which is capable of uniting all states and conditions, can never admit of those shocking distinctions which you wish to make, and which would absolutely destroy the sentiment. I would have *Flora*'s husband her lover at the same time, and then she can never experience those uneasinesses under which I have always laboured. She will have no master to fear. I would have him amiable, because it is necessary she should love him, and that she should do her duty at the same time that she follows the dictates of her own heart. For these two months past I have had many conversations with her on this subject; and have endeavoured to convince her, that marriage is an engagement which ought to be as delightful as it is sacred; and to this idea she listens with great pleasure, as I tell her con-

tinually, that the greatest happiness she can enjoy is to find in her husband the object of her tenderest affection. I also represent to her the dangers she will meet with in the world, and the rocks that she may chance to encounter; and here perhaps I may exaggerate a little, in order that she may have some distrust of it; and that this distrust may give her that pleasing timidity so necessary and so agreeable in all young persons to preserve them from the heedlessness and imprudence of acting improperly. This is my system, it is plain matter of fact, and well known; but, if it is a good one, why should we seek to refine upon it? I have always thought the plainest path was the most eligible. I conjure you, my dear friend, to read my letter attentively, and to answer me very minutely. I make objections to your opinions, and lay my doubts before you; but my confidence in your judgment is not in the smallest degree lessened.

Madame *d'Oralis* has at last determined to accept the employment her husband has so long wished her to take; and I fancy you are the person who has prevailed on her. She has been the more fearful of attaching herself to a Princess, lest she should not acquit herself to her own satisfaction, or take on herself a task which she was afraid of not discharging with propriety. Adieu, my dear friend, send me an account of *Cecilia*. She writes to me frequently, but she says not a word of her health, which I am very uneasy about.

## LETTER XXXIX.

*Answer from the Baronesse.*

IF I am not able to convince you of the truth of my arguments, I shall at least fulfil the duty of a sincere and affectionate friend in telling you all my thoughts. Perhaps I may not have done well in straying from the *beaten path*; but I am sincere, and, if I have gone a little way from my point, it is because I thought I should the more certainly arrive at it. Love, you say, puts every thing on an equality. Yes, that momentary passion, which is disapproved and destroyed by reason; but not that sentiment of reflection, which is founded on esteem and confidence; which is agreeable to the laws of society, and formed by Nature. These are the sentiments which give to men power and authority. You have given your daughter a very unjust and dangerous representation of this matter. You have described love to her in such a manner, that now she wishes to have a lover, or, to express myself better, she wants to govern, and will esteem him a Tyrant who will not submit to be her slave; and if she should not have such a husband, as you have given her the idea of, if he should not answer those expectations, do you think she could content herself with regarding him as a friend; when a wife fulfils her duty, and knows her dependance, if her husband has the least delicacy, even without a violent affection for her, he will never treat her with so much severity or opposition, as to make her feel her inferiority. Though we are jealous of

the rights which are disputed with us, the more are granted to us, the more generous we are. And where is the heart which has not experienced this truth? I must also confess to you, that I do not better approve what you have said to your daughter concerning the dangers she may meet with in the world. I know it is generally the first thing young women are taught, and by hearing it often repeated they believe it; and, when they first go into the world, they are so ill able to defend themselves against these ideal dangers, which have been described to them in so dreadful a light, that they must be above human nature, to be able to avoid falling into them. Let us suppose, a beautiful and amiable young woman, without experience or advice, married to a man she does not love, and appearing for the first time at Court. Here is every sort of danger united together. I only wish, to preserve her from them, that she should have good sense, a little penetration and reflection; and, with this disposition, she will begin to make observations, she will see with what respect and attention women are treated whose characters are without spot; she will even see, that vice itself does homage to virtue; or at least that it never ridicules or speaks ill of it, but, when it is thought to be only pretended, she will see coquettes in the midst of their triumphs meeting with the contempt which is due to them; she will be struck with the humiliating part a woman of forty is obliged to act, when she has lost her reputation; she will be obliged to listen to the stories of her youthful misconduct, which are related with reproach and infamy: she will see the contrast of so disgusting a picture, and from this moment her resolution is fixed; you will perhaps tell

tell me, that in first coming into the world, it is almost impossible for a young person, intoxicated with dissipation, to observe or reflect. But, however, it appears to me to be very easy to look round and observe with attention things which are quite new to us, and to form our opinions from these observations. The world does not charm us at the first sight; every thing appears too strange to afford us amusement, and the fear and diffidence we carry with us prevents us from taking pleasure in it; so that the first year is always tedious, disagreeable, and fatiguing: let it then be usefully employed, while the head is cool, the manners simple, and the heart innocent. Wretched will those be who suffer this precious moment to escape them, without reaping the advantages it offers. But you must be sensible, my dear friend, that if your scholar has only had a common education, if her inclinations are confined to a ball or the choice of a new gown; if you marry her at fifteen; or if, before that, you introduce her too soon into company. If she has, in short, seen every thing before she was capable of forming a right opinion, her reason will never be able to make any new discovery, nothing will surprise or affect her; and she will consequently follow the stream. Adieu, my dear friend. It is with real concern I make these melancholy reflections with respect to a child, who I assure you is as dear to me as to yourself: the affectionate interest I take in her may perhaps make the danger appear greater than it really is. But I have laid my heart entirely open to you, and have disguised nothing from you. *Cecilia's* health continues much the same; but her tranquillity seems quite restored, and she never appeared more calm

and easy. The Physician from Carcassone, who is a man of great merit, came yesterday to see her, and spent an hour with her in her apartment. When he came away from her, his countenance really terrified us, as it appeared he had been weeping. However he assured Mons. *d'Aimeri*, *Cecilia* was then very well, and that he had no fears on her account. But I must own I have a great many, and I shall never be free from them till the Autumn is over.

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## LETTER XL.

*The same to the same.*

YOU still have some doubts, my dear friend; and you think it would be useful to give a young and beautiful woman some idea of the number of lovers she is likely to meet with on her entrance into the world. They are neither graces nor beauty, which attract the crowd you speak of; it is merely coquetry, which allures them. You remember Madame *de Clancy*, the most beautiful woman in our time, and without doubt one of the most amiable. Did you ever hear of any one's being in love with her? Every one admired and respected her, but nobody followed her; because she was truly virtuous, modest, and reserved: while her cousin Madame *de Clevaux*, with a very indifferent person, was continually surrounded by all the young men of fashion. Love never can subsist without hope; and, let a woman be ever so charming, you may be sure, if she inspires any one with

with a serious passion, that she meant to do so ; and that she is not entirely free from coquetry. A sensible man never loves passionately, but when he thinks he is beloved again ; and a vain man would never subject his vanity to the contempt he might meet with ; he depends always on being successful. Why then should he run the hazard of being humbled ? Examine your heart thoroughly, my dear friend, and you will perhaps acknowledge I am in the right. Do you remember the poor Chevalier *de Herbain*, whose brain you almost turned, and to whom you was for ever saying, Indeed, I can never feel a mutual affection for you, and I must absolutely put an end to your addresses, but you continued to receive them ; you suffered him to entertain you with his passion a thousand different ways, and you allowed him to follow you every-where, so that you took up all his attention. Was not this giving him encouragement ? You are sensible how this conduct hurt your character, and that, when I spoke to you so seriously about it, you told me it was not in your power to cure him of his folly. I undertook the cure myself, provided you would only second me : and in one single conversation we convinced him, he had not common sense in loving you so tenderly. You may not perhaps have forgot, that he told you, a little angrily, your explanation came rather too late ; and that, if you had told him so six months sooner, he should never have been so much in love with you. He spoke truth, and you would have been much more sensible of your fault, if he had been a vain, impertinent coxcomb, instead of being a virtuous and good man ; for then he would have revenged himself by speaking ill of you ; and be assured, after such conduct, however innocent

innocent you might be, many people would have given credit to his assertions.

We will now come to what you say with regard to love. You seem to think a woman, who has no affection for her husband, can scarce live without having a lover. If this is not exactly your expression, it is at least the meaning of it. You repeat, "The heart is made for love :" I agree, that there must be a passion to agitate and employ it. But why must that passion be love ? It is a general notion, that every body in the course of their lives are under the impulse of a violent affection. There are scarcely any young persons, who have not admitted this absurd idea. Formerly young people were told ridiculous stories with good intentions, which were listened to with credulous simplicity. But, now their minds are more enlightened, it is not the mind, but it is the heart which is deceived. By talking upon sentiment they have formed a false definition of it, as far from Nature as it is contrary to reason. The language of men and women are quite contradictory on this subject ; one party exhaust themselves in making disflertations on the violence of their passions, while the other, when among themselves, deny its existence, on one side it is the most sublime philosophy, and on the other the direct contrary. One may conclude from hence, that one ought equally to distrust a pompous display of extravagant sentiments, and the affectation of a vain boaster. In the present mode of education, a mother thinks she does quite right in suffering her daughter to read what are called moral novels or romances. For instance, the *Princess of Cleves*, where they say you will find such beautiful examples of virtue ; where the Heroine resists with so much strength

strength and resolution a most violent passion. In seeing the excess of the affection which governs her, and the dreadful struggles she has with herself, if one is to believe this a faithful representation of the human heart, we must also believe, that love is totally independent of our will; that it is useless to oppose it in its progress; and that virtue is only a torment to us. This is a very moral and satisfactory conclusion! A young woman, instructed in such reading, married to a man she does not love, but fancying, that she is to be violently in love some time or other, waits for the fatal moment with anxiety, it soon arrives: The first person who speaks of love is exactly him whom Heaven has predestined to inspire her with a sentiment, which is to be the torment of her life. No more repose, no more sleep, sweet liberty is gone for ever; a gloomy melancholy succeeds to all her cheerfulness; in short, she is herself the Princess of *Cleves*; and she then begins to think she loves still more than the Princess, or that the Author perhaps has rather exceeded the truth, in the account he gives of her resistance, which indeed appears to be probable. A tender and ardent lover at length obtains from her the confession which he solicits: in the first moments of this weakness which is new to her, she afflicts herself, sighs, and submits to her destiny; but, as soon as the veil is fallen aside, these romantic notions grow weaker: the Heroine perceives with surprize, that she loves no longer, or rather that she never has loved: she finds herself deceived, and that she has not found this ideal object, which was to inspire her with so tender a passion. At first she waited for the moment to arrive. But now she seeks for it without being happier, and will not be discouraged, till amidst repeated errors the pleasing days of her youth are

are vanished like a tiresome dream, which only leaves behind it confused and vague ideas of a thousand follies as strange as they are absurd. It is then she makes bitter reflections: the past humbles, the future terrifies her. The illusion is totally destroyed! Abandoned by the crowd of flatterers who surrounded her, she finds herself neglected, and a stranger in the midst of her family and children. She reads in their faces the frightful sentence which condemns her, contempt pursues her, sorrow and repentance consume her, and, to compleat her misfortunes, her race is not yet half run. I believe it is infinitely more easy to find a woman who never had a lover, than to meet with those who never had but one. The first step is the most difficult, when that is passed, the rest of the way is very smooth; nevertheless I know there have been instances, but they are so rare they can only be mentioned as exceptions. Love at the beginning is never very ardent. It is at first only a sentiment of preference, of which it is very easy to stop the progress, by ceasing to see the object who has inspired it. This is the most certain means; and the remembrance will be effaced with very little trouble. But if a woman hesitates, if she will blind herself on this attachment which she has formed, or if she will exaggerate the degree of it, resistance will become more painful and victory more difficult. There is no sensible woman who has yielded to this weakness, but has for a long time foreseen her defeat. She who maintains her cause with resolution, will never be conquered. The determinations of a virtuous and serious mind cannot be destroyed in a moment; in that case virtue would only be a vain and chimerical idea. Now it is that you must examine the

very

very bottom of your heart ; question it, and its answer will be worth more than a treatise on morality. —A singular reflection is just come into my head, Paris is the center of tumult and dissipation ; the confusion of ideas which arise from so many different objects must ill agree with love ; which is always described as preferring concealment and solitude ; and yet it always appears here under many and various forms. Whilst in the country, far from noise and bustle, we see no woman retired to her country-seat, who falls desperately in love with her neighbours. In general, she is attached to her husband, and the life she leads prevents her from entertaining romantic ideas. In coming still nearer to Nature, we do not see among the peasants any other than moderate sentiments, which can scarcely be called passions, although they are affectionately attached to their parents, their wives and their children. Ought we to believe, that our improved understandings are the cause of these contrary effects ? Ought we not rather to search for them in our hearts ? Adieu ! my dear friend. *Cecilia*, to whom I have given your last letter, has answered it, as you will see. She is truly affected with the proofs of friendship you have give her. We talk of you continually. And, if she had no other merit than that of knowing how to value you, I find it would be impossible for me not to love her with the greatest tenderness.

## LETTER XLI.

*Same to the same.*

AT length you say your daughter's heart is engaged ; she loves Mons. *de Valey*, and prefers him to every other man ; you have therefore given your consent. You are to blame, my dear friend, any longer to fear my censure. It is very natural to make reflections, when one fancies they may be of use ; but it would be very absurd to persevere in condemning an affair which is determined on. That would be merely to shew my opinion without proving my friendship. I beg therefore you will be assured I am greatly interested for Mons. *de Valey* ; and that in future I will only look forward to the advantages which may arise from this union. Your daughter is not to leave you ; she will live with you ; this is a very lucky circumstance. You may watch over her actions, and gain the confidence and friendship of her husband, and, at the same time, keep her from the counsels of her mother-in-law. In short, she will be under your eye, and I shall have no more fears for her safety.

You think, what I said in my last letter upon the subject of reading novels is too severe. You think forbidding young people to read them is the only way to make them more earnest to get at them. I am of the same opinion ; for, as soon as ever a young woman comes to be her own mistress, she will make herself amends for the constraint she had laboured under, and she will read every novel she can lay her hands on. What I object

to is their being allowed to read novels, just at the time when they are most likely to make impressions on them ; that is, when they are about sixteen or seventeen. I know but of three novels which have any morality in them ; *Clarissa*, which is the best, *Grandison*, and *Pamela*. My daughter shall read them in English, when she comes to be eighteen ; as to the generality of all the rest, I shall begin to let her read them when she is a little older. By the time she is thirteen, she will read a very small number of these Works, the best of their kind ; and reading them with me, at that age, will do her no kind of harm, but on the contrary will help to form her judgment, in letting her see the faults and ill consequences, as well as the improbability of the greatest part of these books, even of those that we reckon the best. After this time she will never see me read them ; she will not even meet with them in my library. And she will never hear me speak of them without contempt. With these precautions, I am very certain, when she is twenty years old, she will never have an inclination to amuse herself in so trifling a way with books, which are only calculated to corrupt the heart, as well as mislead the judgment.

You desire me to be very particular in my account of *Adelaide*'s improvements. She can draw a head very prettily ; she knows all our Historical Pictures by heart. The copies, from which she writes, have made her acquainted with the Scriptures : she speaks English as well as Miss *Bridget* ; she begins to read very well ; she understands singing tolerably ; and she can perform the most difficult lessons on the harp in a very pleasing manner. She has at present learned only the first rules of Arithmetic,

Arithmetick, but she can calculate amazingly well. For her writing and spelling you yourself can judge ; and I think, in this respect, very few, if any, children exceed her. As she will be eight years old the tenth of next October, which is three weeks hence ; I intend to make her read an Historical Work, which I have written for her, and which is called *Annals of Virtue*, and is written in six volumes. It contains a particular account of all the great actions, together with the singular and memorable events, taken from the publick and private History of People of all Nations, from the Creation down to the present time, in Chronological order ; and contains also an abstract of the best laws made use of in different Governments ; extracts from the sentiments and morality of the most celebrated Philosophers ; and a short, though tolerably exact account of the manners and customs of the Ancients. I have placed each History according to its degree of antiquity, or rather according to the connection between countries, as China and Japan, France and England, &c. &c. Each History begins by a Chronological abridgement, which precedes the separate events ; and to this abridgement I have added a short Geographical Description of each country, its extent, situation, &c. &c. As I wrote this Work for the use of children, I was particularly desirous it should improve their understanding and their hearts at the same time. A child, from eight years old to twelve, is not capable of making reflections unless they are assisted, and, even then, I think it is dangerous for them to read those Histories which we esteem the best. This History, so proper for us to read, because we can understand and reflect on it, is useless to children,

dren, who, by being dazzled by every appearance of grandeur, do not perceive the cruelty or injustice of an action which appears glorious and is attended with success. How many young Princes heads have been turned by reading the life of Alexander the Great ! It is well known, what an effect it had on the mind of Charles the Twelfth, when a child. The chief point, which I have kept to in this book, is not to judge of persons and things, but as they really deserve ; never to praise those who do not deserve praise ; and, in short, to make such reflections on each character and event as may enable *Adelaide* to form a right judgment of them, by the time she comes to read our best Histories.

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## LETTER XLII.

*Viscountess to the Baroneſſ.*

OH, my dear friend ! What a day is this, which has just past ! . . . . It is done ! *Flora* is married . . . . At length she has pronounced the dreadful word which engages her for ever . . . . Her fate is fixed, independent of me for the future . . . . and it is for ever ! . . . . There are circumstances, without which we should not know the excess of our sensibility. She who has never seen her daughter married, or at the point of death, can have no perfect idea what it is to be a mother . . . . I cannot describe to you all that has passed in my mind since yesterday. Certainly I see with different eyes, I have a different heart and another way of thinking ; I am no longer the same person !

... In

.... In one moment I have discovered my daughter dearer to me than any thing on earth, and that all my happiness depends on our future fortune. I have no idea how it should happen, that her education has not always been the principal concern of my life. I am continually reproaching myself for having neglected it, and for suffering her to marry so young; and above all with having made a choice, which at this time appears to me full of inconveniencies. The conduct of her mother-in-law comes back to my memory under the most odious colours. I blush to hear my daughter call her mother. .... If I had been my own mistress this morning, if I could have broke the engagement, my child should have been free; she should still have been mine. .... Mons. *de Valey* appears to me nothing more than a coxcomb, without sense and without character. .... Add to all these painful ideas the presence of Madame *de Gerville*, who has been here all day, and who triumphs in her own power, and the vexation she has given me. .... Ah! it is at this moment that I feel, in the anguish of my heart, how happy I might have been, had I followed your advice! I should then have gained the confidence of Mons. *Limours*. My daughter would have had a proper education. Vanity and folly would never have led me into such imprudences; and I should not now be a prey to useless remorse! .... For these four and twenty hours I have not had a moment's peace; it is now one in the morning. The company are in the saloon; they are all at cards; and I at this hour of midnight have escaped from them to shut myself up with you! .... With you! .... I may say so; but,

but, alas ! you are two hundred leagues from me ! . . . . My dear friend, you have forsaken me. . . . But I have still some friends left who see my grief and pity me, though their compassion humbles rather than comforts me ; it appears as an indirect reproach on my conduct, since it is but too true I am made unhappy by my own fault ; and this kind of pity is always mixed with a contempt which makes it insupportable. I want none but yours ; whatever it may be, it is necessary and valuable to me. Ah, do not refuse it ! I weep while I am writing. . . . . Never, never, have I been so deeply afflicted . . . . so melancholy, so apprehensive ! . . . . And on the day on which I have married my daughter ! the day which ought to be the happiest of my life ! . . . . But it appears to me as if I was not in my own house, but in that of a stranger ! . . . . Only think of Mons. *de Limours* ! he has not for these two days had a wish to see me alone, that he might speak to me of his daughter. This evening they were talking of her being presented. Her mother-in-law was for having it done the day after to-morrow, or this evening at eight, leaving Mons. *de Limours* to determine. I told them I should have preferred a more distant day ; but Mons. *de Limours* did not seem to hear me, and it was fixed for the nearest. A thousand other little things of this kind have contradicted and vexed me to an unreasonable degree. But you know my violence, and that I am extreme in every thing. I have no patience, no consideration. I am not apt to fancy grievances, they are actually before my face. I do not concern myself in a moderate way ; I am absolutely in despair. Adieu, my dear friend, adieu ! pity me, love me, write

write to me, and remember that you only can console me, or at least mitigate my sorrows ! I have a dreadful head-ach. I almost wish it was a dangerous illness. I should hope then you would return hither to take care of me. As for any thing else, I assure you I should leave this world very willingly ; for there is nothing in it very agreeable to me.

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## LETTER XLIII.

*Madame d'Ostalis to the Baroneess.*

DO not alarm yourself, my dear aunt, for Madame *de Limours*. I am not at all surprized, that, having wrote to you on the day of her daughter's marriage, she shall have made you so uneasy, for she was in a dreadful situation ; but, happily for her, she is as easily calmed as she is irritated. The morning after the wedding I went to see her, and found her spirits extremely low. Going out of her apartment, and knowing Mons. *de Limours* was alone in his, Mons. *d'Ostalis* and I went to see him ; we both spoke to him on his behaviour to Madame *de Limours*. He smiled and asked me if you had appointed me your deputy to preach to him. I told him I should never have sense enough to be able to take your place ; and that I was much too young to venture to give advice, if the tenderest friendship did not allow me such a liberty. At these words he quitted the tone of raillery, and we entered into a serious explanation. He complained with some reason of Madame *de Limours*'s capricious temper, but he did justice

justice to the rest of her amiable qualities; and, when I informed him she was really ill, he appeared disposed to do every thing which I should judge necessary to make her mind easy; and he intreated me to return to dinner, in order, as he said, that I might judge of his behaviour. And indeed he treated her with the utmost kindness, which made the more impression on Madame *de Limours*, as there were forty people at dinner. By degrees she grew cheerful; she forgot her headache and her nervous complaints; and never was more amiable in her life. You know, my dear aunt, how charming she is when she wishes to please; so that, in short, she gains the attention of every body, as if they had never seen her before. And the Chevalier *d'Herbain* is in the right when he says, that, *when she chuses to make herself agreeable, it is impossible any other person can be taken notice of.* He has, however, great merit in never peaking of her, and in endeavouring to make her esteemed by other people. Madame *de Gerville* was there at dinner, and made but a poor figure; or all her smart, studied, little expressions appeared very insipid, compared with the natural wit of Madame *de Limours*, who is never more generous than when she conquers. Madame *de Limours* lied all in her power to keep her in good humour and satisfied with herself. But Madame *Gerville*, governed only by her malicious spirit, received all her attentions with such a ridiculous coldness, that Mons. *de Limours* himself was vexed at it, and treated Madame *de Gerville* with a kind of raillery of which you know he is capable. Madame *de Gerville* enraged, and disengaged; would have acted a curious scene, if

Madame *de Limours* had not taken her part; and, with a cheerfulness and grace which it is impossible to describe to you, turned every thing which had been said into pleasantry. What a pity that, with so many charms, so much wit and liberality of sentiment, Madame *de Limours* has not her ideas better connected and more steadiness of opinion! However, she is at present perfectly satisfied, delighted with Mons. *de Limours*, charmed with her daughter, her son-in-law, and even Madame *de Valey*. You ask me, my dear aunt, to give you an account of *Flora*, or, to speak more properly, Madame the Marchioness *de Valey*; I will tell you freely what I think of her. She is grown very much since you saw her. She has a very good shape, because she is laced very tight, which makes her waist appear slender; she has not a good complexion; but her eyes are almost as beautiful as Madame *de Limours*', though she has not her lovely countenance or her graces. The fear of disordering her head-dress, or rumpling her gown, gives such a stiffness to her motions, that it makes her quite disagreeable. As to her talents, or other qualifications, one word expresses the whole: she dances perfectly well. In short, I think she has very little understanding, and, what is much worse for her, I fear she has not a good heart; and I am sure she has a great deal of cunning. For example, she affects to be artless and innocent, with such a degree of cunning as quite shocks me, who have known her from infancy but deceives many other people, particularly the Chevalier *d'Herbain*, who has a collection of <sup>very</sup> innocent sayings, which he repeats with a satisfaction that always puts me out of temper. Upon

the whole she is pretty; her youth makes her pleasing, and she is generally admired. As for Mons. *de Valey*, he is a mere nothing. He gives himself many airs, and has not one single idea; he pretends to be inattentive and absent, and his conversation consists only in repeating with an affected air what others have just said. There is but one opinion concerning him: he is equally troublesome, free, and talkative; besides this, he has the *Anglo-manie* to a great degree. He unfortunately spent fourteen days in London, and speaks of it incessantly; is always boasting of the learning and genius of the English; he despises the French from his heart. He keeps English horses, reads the English newspapers, makes his morning visits with boots and spurs, drinks tea twice a day, and thinks himself as wise as Newton or Locke.

Now, my dear aunt, allow me to talk to you of my own affairs: I have left my little twins for a twelvemonth with my mother-in-law. As soon as they are five years old, I shall take them with me. I am told this is a very absurd scheme, and that, being wholly employed in my attentions on the Princess, it will be impossible to educate my children. It is very true these little journeys carry me from Paris for near two months in the summer, which will prevent me from taking care of them for that time; but then I shall intrust them to a Governess on whose fidelity I can depend; and, when they are older, I shall send them to a Convent for those two months. In short, I shall make fewer visits; I shall not go to balls or any public places, but when I am obliged to attend the Princess; and I am certain I shall find time enough to fulfil all my duty towards her, and at

the same time attend to the education of my children. The only concern I have is the thoughts of not being able to come to Languedoc; and, when I reflect that it will still be eighteen months before I shall see you, I am then convinced that Prudence herself does not make us amends for the sacrifices she requires of us. Adieu, my dear aunt! Do me the favour to send me the little Tales, and other Papers relative to Education, which you have promised me; for what can I do without you? . . . .

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## LETTER XLIV.

*Answer from the Baroness to Madame d'Ostalis.*

**I** AM entirely of your opinion, my dear child. When we make a point of doing our duty, there is no situation in which we are unable to attend to it. When the inclination leads us, we shall always find time.

I am told since your last lying-in you have learned to ride on horseback. I must own I have very little right to condemn this exercise, which I have been very fond of. But, however, you are sensible I renounced it entirely, when my attentions to you became really of use. I do not know an amusement more dangerous in every respect for women than this is, or which leads them to waste their time more. In the different rides about Paris you meet all the young men of fashion, and you know how often those meetings have been taken

taken for assignations, and that this very circumstance ruined the character of Madame *de Tervure*. Besides, how is it possible you can employ yourself with your children, improve your understanding, or fulfil the duties of your station, if you ride on horseback three or four times a week? That is to say, if you pass those three days in the *Bois de Boulogne*, and in dressing and undressing yourself. I cannot finish this letter without adding some remarks on the manner in which you ought to conduct yourself in your new situation. First, you must never forget that your family desired and solicited this place for you; and this remembrance will preserve you from the absurd custom of complaining of the duty imposed on you. It is a piece of affectation much in vogue to appear dissatisfied with the society of Princes, and to complain of the obligation we are under to go to Versailles. Although, by an inconsistency as striking as it is absurd, people would be in despair, were they to give up this task, which they pretend to be irksome, for that liberty which they boast of with so much emphasis. Besides, remember that every chain which it is possible to break becomes disgraceful, when those who carry it appear to do it with regret, which is saying in plain terms, I sacrifice my pleasures, my inclinations, the happiness of my life to my interest and ambition! For you, my dear child, I hope that you have sentiments too noble to suffer yourself to be misled by such examples. Never allow yourself to make the smallest complaint on this subject; and, as affection alone will make every thing appear in a more dignified light, love the Princess sincerely to whom you are attached, as she merits your affection by the qualities she

possesses. I am certain she will very soon distinguish you. When she learns the integrity of your mind, and the goodness of your heart, then you will be so much the more to be envied, as you are young, beautiful, engaging, and have a character without blemish. Many efforts will be made to injure you with the Princess; every body will speak ill of you, some openly, and others with more art and finesse. To all this make no other opposition but that of innocence and generosity; be always open, true, and disinterested. Never employ your own credit to hurt that of your enemies; appear to know them, but at the same time do justice to their good qualities, and never complain of them. On the contrary, if the Princess should be angry with you through their base endeavours, try all in your power to soften her; and, if they should afterwards ask a favour which she seems unwilling to grant them, intreat her with earnestness, and enjoy the noble pleasure of obtaining it for them. This, my dear child, is an art infinitely superior to intrigue; an art of which common minds are ignorant, which will revenge you even of your most dangerous enemies, and will give you a triumph over even envy itself. Adieu! my child, I send you all the papers you desire, and I expect with impatience the miniatures you promised me. I am told, that, since my departure, you have made an astonishing progress, and that you are quite a proficient in painting. Adieu! Cultivate your genius, and remember your success in every particular, will contribute to the pleasure and happiness of my life.

## LETTER XLV.

*The Baroneſſe to the Viceroy.*

AT length, my dear friend, there are no longer any hopes of our amiable *Cecilia*. She is nearly arrived at the end of her long sufferings, and, in a few days, will perhaps be no longer in existence. It is now two months since she has known her danger; she obliged Mons. *Lambert*, the Physician from Carcassonne, to inform her of the truth, at the same time forbidding him to acquaint her family with her real situation. Yesterday morning I received a note written by herself, desiring me, if possible, to come and see her immediately; I obeyed her summons, and found her alone in the castle, as Mons. *d'Aimeri* and Madame *de Valmont* were gone to make a visit in the neighbourhood. She was seated in a great chair, for as yet she has not kept her bed a single day. I was shocked at seeing her so pale and weak; nevertheless she appeared to recover herself on seeing me, and made me sit down by her. I know, my dear Madam, said she, your sensibility; therefore allow me, before I explain myself, to assure you, that it is impossible for any body to be more perfectly happy than I am at this time.... This beginning prepared me but too well for what she was going to tell me. Ah! what, cried I!.... What has M. *Lambert* said to you?.... I saw him this morning.... Ah! what?.... He has told me, I ought to bid you a last adieu... At these words some drops moistened her eye-lids; as for me, I was drowned in tears.... we were a moment without speaking.... at last *Cecilia* said, What,

Madam ! does my happiness afflict you?... Ah, *Cecilia!* interrupted I, you deceived us when you assured us you would wish to live!.... No, replied she, I did not deceive you; if the Almighty had prolonged my pilgrimage, I should have submitted to his will, not only without repining, but without concern. Since my last illness he has changed my heart: this heart formerly so weak!— It was in the cottage of *Nichole* that I received the stroke which deprives me of life.... What I suffered at that time can neither be conceived nor expressed: I abhorred my existence, and yet I looked upon death with inexpressible fear and terror; and I experienced in those dreadful moments, that, without innocence and purity of heart, there is no true courage. In short, when I was thought to be out of danger, I was convinced I was only snatched from death for a short time: I made use of the delay which was granted me. I reflected on my errors and the guilty illusion of all the passions to which we are subject. I ventured to address myself with confidence to the Divine Being; he heard my prayers, and restored me to peace and tranquillity. He raised my soul towards him, and became the sole object of all my affections and my dearest hopes. She had scarce finished these words, when I saw her paleness vanish; her eyes were animated, and her countenance was brightened by the most striking and noble expression. The firm tone of her voice, the sweetness of her looks, the majestic serenity of her countenance, made me change insensibly from grief to admiration! I thought I saw, I thought I heard an Angel. I looked at her with eagerness; I listened to her with respect; and, when she had ceased to speak,

I re-

I regarded her with rapture, and I was affected in a manner too extraordinary to suffer me to break silence. At length she explained to me her reasons for wishing to see me alone. She intreated me gently to prepare her father and sister for the event, which, she said, she felt must be extremely near.... You may guess with what reluctance I charged myself with this commission, and with what grief I performed it! Mons. *d'Aimeri* and Madame *de Valmont* saw nothing in *Cecilia*'s situation but that weakness which is generally the consequence of severe illness. They had flattered themselves from her youth and her air of content, and they were absolutely quite ignorant of the symptoms which rendered her situation so dangerous. However, as one lively sentiment is often replaced by another, Mons. *d'Aimeri*, from the first words I uttered, was sensible of all his misfortune. But, as if he wished still to encourage a ray of hope, he all at once ceased to question me, and, a moment after, went and shut himself up in *Cecilia*'s chamber. As to Madame *de Valmont*, she had so much pain to understand me, that I was obliged to repeat to her almost all *Cecilia* had said to me. I staid with her till the evening. It is now three days since I saw her; she writes to me that her sister is in the same situation; that Mons. *d'Aimeri* is overwhelmed with grief; and that the perfect resignation and angelic piety of *Cecilia* procure him the only consolations he is capable of receiving. Adieu, my dear friend! These things have so troubled and distressed me, that I have been really ill. I shall go the day after to-morrow to Madame *de Valmont*, and I will write to you the same evening, before I go to bed.

## LETTER XLVI.

*From the same to the same.*

ALAS!.... She is no more!.... Oh, to what a dreadful sight have I been witness!.... It is the unfortunate Mons. *d'Aimeri*, it is he alone, who is at this time to be pitied!.... Ah! if for one fault, though in truth an irreparable one, yet expiated by ten years repentance, Heaven punishes with such severity; what is there which unnatural parents have not to fear, who seek to blind themselves on the heinous crime of their injustice?.... My mind is so taken up with what I have this day seen; my heart is so much affected by it, that I can speak of nothing else; hear then this melancholy recital, it shall be faithful and true; and it appears to me, that I am too much affected not to communicate to you a part of those deep impressions which I have received myself. I came to Madame *de Valmont*'s to-day at dinner time. I found all the family in great consternation, and they told me *Cecilia* had been so ill in the night, that they had sent for the Physician; that she had received the Sacrament; but that at present she was better, and that she had just got up. I went into her chamber; she was seated on a sopha between her father and sister, and the Physician was offering her a médecine. As soon as I appeared, Madame *de Valmont* came to me, and said, with an air of satisfaction which shocked me, she has had a dreadful crisis, but is better; she is surprisingly better now. At these words, I cast my eyes

eyes on the Physician, as if to know his opinion : and he gave me a look which made me tremble. My heart beat in such a manner, I was obliged to sit down.... At this moment Mons. *d'Aimeri* began to speak ; certainly, said he, as she has had the strength to go through the crisis of this night, we have all the reason to believe, that she is now entirely out of danger. Indeed, added Madame *de Valmont*, looking at the Physician, to think otherwise would be very absurd..... Ah ! my sister, my dear sister ! you have little reason !.... Mons. *d'Aimeri*, who till then had kept a profound silence, cast his eyes, which were filled with tears, on *Cecilia* ; and, seizing one of her hands, ah, why, said he, with a voice scarce intelligible, why would you deprive us of our hopes !.... All the reply *Cecilia* made was to throw both her arms round her father's neck, and to keep them there for some minutes without speaking. Afterwards, addressing herself to Madame *de Valmont*, she asked her where *Charles* was, and appeared desirous to see him. They sent for him, and, when he came, *Cecilia* made him sit down at the foot of the sopha, and, observing that his eyes looked red, *Charles*, said she to him, you have been weeping too ! *Charles*, at these words, kissed her hand, and rested his head on his aunt's lap, not daring to shew his face, as he still continued weeping. *Cecilia* perceiving her hand wet with his tears, *Charles*, said she, if you were not quite so young, you would learn, that, after a life well spent, this moment, in which you now see me, is the most delightful, the happiest of my days .. . . . My body is very weak and languid, but my mind is quiet and content..... I feel such delightful sentiments, . . . . I am sure,

*Charles*, that you will add to the happiness of my father, and that you will love him as tenderly as I do..... As she finished speaking, *Charles* got up hastily, and, bathed in tears, threw himself into the arms of his grand-father..... I cannot express to you the grace and sensibility with which he performed this action. Mons. *d'Aimeri* pressed him to his bosom with the most passionate tenderness, and, taking his hand, led him out of his daughter's chamber, in order, without doubt, to give himself up to all the grief with which he was penetrated. A moment after *Cecilia* intreated us all to go to dinner. You will suppose we were not long at table. Madame *de Valmont* persevered in keeping up her hopes. For my part, I had none: for the Physician told me absolutely, that *Cecilia* could not live twenty-four hours. When we had dined, we returned to her chamber, and found her quite composed; and the Priest, who had not left her, told us she appeared better than she had done the evening before. We seated ourselves round the sopha, and, a moment after, *Cecilia* said, she had a desire to try if she could walk. Her father and the Physician helped to lift her from her seat, and supported her by her arms: but she had scarce taken five or six steps, when, stopping suddenly, she cried, oh, my father!..... At this plaintive and piercing cry, Mons. *d'Aimeri*, almost distracted, took her in his arms; she leaned gently on him, with her eyes half closed!..... The Physician seized her hand, and after feeling her pulse, made a sign to the Priest, who at the same moment took a Crucifix, and, approaching *Cecilia*, said with a loud voice these dreadful words: *Recommend your soul to God!* On hearing this,

*Cecilia*

*Cecilia* opened her eyes, and, raising them towards Heaven, pressed the Crucifix to her bosom ; and in this attitude her whole person and countenance had an expression and majesty which gave her beauty the appearance of something celestial. After having said her prayers, all at once she threw herself on her knees, saying, " My father, give " me your blessing !" Mons. *d'Aimeri* threw himself down by her, his arms trembling, once more unfolding themselves to receive his beloved child . . . *Cecilia* fell on the bosom of her unhappy father ; . . . it was then all over . . . She expired ! . . .

After this melancholy story, you will not expect any other particulars. It is sufficient for me to tell you that Mons. *d'Aimeri*'s grief is far above any thing that can be felt by those who have no children. I obliged him to come with me to B—the same evening, with Madame *de Valmont* and *Charles* ; and, when he is in a situation to receive our friendly advice, we mean to persuade him to travel with his grandson : for that will be the only method of supporting his spirits in his present situation. Adieu, my dear friend ! Write to me ; I am very melancholy ; you know, that I am not lightly affected on these occasions ; you know how dear my friends are to me, when I see them afflicted and distressed : so you may judge, how much I am concerned, and how necessary your letters will be to me.

## LETTER. XLVII.

*Count de Roseville to the Baron.*

**I**PROMISED, my dear Baron, to send you an account of a truly interesting scene, which I was preparing for my pupil. I could not satisfy your curiosity sooner, as I was willing nothing should be wanting to my History; and it has cost me six months search to find what I desired.

I have already told you, my young Prince promises to be possessed of very brilliant qualities; he has good sense, a lively imagination, and a happy disposition. But I observed in him a certain degree of insensibility which afflicted me, though I only attributed it to his want of experience. When one has never been unhappy, nor a witness to scenes of distress, it is not possible to be truly compassionate. It is not bare recitals that can impress our hearts with sentiments, which will be opposed by all those factitious but dangerous passions, to which the corruption of the times give rise. It is not words but examples, which are necessary for this great work; and, above all, affecting scenes, which will leave an indelible impression on a young and innocent heart. Persuaded of the truth of this, I determined to search the city and suburbs for some unfortunate family ready to sink under the weight of their affliction; and, in order to succeed better in my search, I applied myself to a Gentleman who bestows on the poor more than three fourths of a considerable fortune gained by his own industry in trade.

He

He is a stranger in this country, and is called Mons. *d'Anglures*; his country and his birth are unknown. He speaks several languages equally well. He has lived here about ten years, in a small house, on the borders of the lake ---- The singularity of his way of living attracted our Sovereign's curiosity, who desired to see him. One should imagine that Mons. *d'Anglures* had related to him some very affecting story, for the Prince, from that moment, has shewn a particular regard for him, and soon after employed him in different negociations, which, by their consequences, have gained the Prince's confidence, and he has loaded him with kindness. For these two years past, Mons. *d'Anglures* has retired from Court, and lives in peace and solitude at his own house, which he has made one of the most delightful places in this country. I went to him about three months ago, to tell him of my scheme. He gave me all the intelligence I could wish; but I was too difficult to determine hastily. I considered I should lose my object, if I only made a slender impression; and, when I had succeeded in the choice of my object, I found all the preparations, which I am going to relate to you, were necessary before-hand. Our young Prince, like all other children, is extremely curious. I therefore affected frequently to speak low, and with an air of secrecy, to M. *Sulback*, his Sub-preceptor. The Prince did not fail to question me about it. I told him, I was employed about an affair, which interested me beyond all expression: and I added, if you was a few years older, I should trust you with it, but at present you are too much a child. At these words you may imagine how much I was intreated;

intreated ; but I was steady, and the Prince could only draw from me some vague answers, which augmented and inflamed his curiosity. At night he was still more uneasy, when he found Monf. *Sulback*'s son was let into our secret ; he made heavy complaints to me : I contented myself with only saying, *Young Sulback* was no longer a child. He is thirteen years old, and is remarkably sensible for his age : and then I changed the conversation. The Prince was out of temper and sullen. I told him, that was not the means by which he would gain my confidence. It is not a distrust of you, said I, which prevents me from acquainting you with the affair we have in agitation. It is, because I think you are too much a child to take any part in it. Yet it is very possible for children of your age to understand and even feel things that are interesting and distressing. If you had not shewn so much curiosity and ill humour, and how little power you had over yourself, I should certainly have told you what you wished to know : but now it will be difficult for you to obtain this favour, and I give you notice, if you do not repair your fault by an extreme prudence, gentleness, and mildness of temper, and if you ask one more question on the subject, you never will possess my confidence. When you promise, as a recompence to a child, the very thing he wishes for, you may make your own terms. The Prince immediately smoothed his brow, and came to me with a mild and fond countenance, promising I should see that he had command over himself ; and he kept his word. The next day after dinner, we were together in his room, when M. *Sulback* and his son entered in a great hurry, and the former, coming

ing up to me, cried out, at last we have found what we sought. I affected the greatest joy, and said, let us go then immediately! What, said the Prince, with an air of surprise and anxiety, are you going out? Yes, answered I, for two or three hours. Shall my son go with us, said Mons. *Sulback*? Oh, I intreat that you will let me, interrupted the young man; I shall be wretched, if you deprive me of this happiness! During this conversation, the Prince looked at us all by turns, and did great violence to himself to conceal his vexation and grief. I took my hat and sword, and prepared to go out. I sent for the people to attend on the Prince in our absence. He came to me, and I embraced and took leave of him. He could not any longer contain himself, and not daring to speak, burst into tears. I appeared much concerned at it, and asked him what was the matter? He acknowledged to me, that he was quite in despair; Mons. *Sulback* begged me to tell him the interesting tale! The Prince intreated... I hesitated.... but at length I yielded. We sat down, and I took the Prince on my knee, and, addressing myself to him, being very certain of fixing his attention, Mons. *Sulback* and I lay aside every month, said I, a part of our yearly income, for the support of unfortunate people, who are oppressed with poverty; and we both make diligent search, that our money may be well disposed of and given to persons who are as honest as they are unfortunate; about six weeks ago, we bought some tickets in the lottery, and we won thirty thousand livres; we immediately formed a scheme, in consequence of this success, to employ half the money, in making one whole family happy; and

we purchased, about three leagues from hence, a neat little farm, provided with all necessaries, and have furnished the house in a plain and neat manner. We have been ever since searching out for a proper object to give it to ; and at length we have found a family, very poor, and very honest ! They live in the suburbs of the city, and we want to go and find them and conduct them to their charming little farm : Mons. *Sulback* here joined in the conversation, and said to me, what pleasure will it give you to see wretched *Alexis Stezin* enjoying peace and happiness, with an aged father, and a wife, and four beautiful children, who this morning, when our messenger arrived there, were all ready to expire with hunger ! At these words, the Prince seizing one of my hands, and throwing his other arm round my neck : Oh, my dear friend ! let me go with you, that I may see all this. His eyes were filled with tears, when he said this. I embraced him tenderly, and told him, since he had sensibility, I should no longer regard him as a child. You shall go to *Alexander Stezin's* ; you are worthy of such a sight, said I to him. The joy and transport the Prince expressed at this is not to be described : he loaded me with embraces and thanks, and was impatient to be gone. While we were preparing for our departure, he walked about the room, holding young *Sulback* by the hand. He had an air of triumph, which seemed to say, " *What*, if I am not thirteen years old, I " am no longer treated as a child."

We went down the back stair-cafe, got into a hackney-coach, and, attended only by two servants in plain cloaths, we set out, the Prince, Mons. *Sulback*, his son, and myself. It was not five

five o'clock ; but, being in the midst of Winter, it was quite dark ; and we suffered more from the extreme cold, as the coach-windows did not shut close, and we had no carpet at the bottom. The Prince took notice of it without complaining. Judge, Sir, said Mons. *Sulback*, by this little proof of the bad effects of cold, what this unhappy family we are now going to relieve must have suffered, having lived all this Winter in a garret, without cloaths or fire, as you that are covered with a warm dress, a long fur cloak, and a large muff, find the weather insupportable. The Prince only answered with a deep sigh, which expressed the greatest humanity. I enjoyed with delight my own work, and I was so much affected I could not speak. In about half an hour we entered into a very narrow street, and the coach stopped. The Prince cried out " This is the place, doubtless, we are arrived ! "—And in his eagerness he tried to open the door and get out. I stopped him, and said, I lay a wager your heart beats !—Yes, indeed, it does very much, said he. They brought us a flambeau, and we went into a house which was, in appearance, ready to fall. We ascended near a hundred and twenty steps ; and, after that, climbed up a little, dark, narrow, wooden stair-case which led us to the garret inhabited by this miserable family. .... In a room, lighted by one dismal lamp, we found a man about thirty years of age lying on straw. He was just recovering from a fainting fit. A young and beautiful woman supported him in her arms, whilst a venerable old man made him smell to some vinegar. Three little boys were at his feet, and a lovely girl about nine or ten years old, who had no other covering than

than a ragged shift, was on her knees before him, praying to God for his recovery, and shedding at the same time a flood of tears ! . . . . This sight, which was quite unexpected, surprised and affected me equally. When the sick man had recovered his senses, we found this accident had been occasioned by the nourishment we had sent him, and which was the first he had taken for three days, as he had persisted in eating nothing for that time, in order that his family might have a little more bread. I made him drink a glass of cordial water, which revived his spirits ; and we then presented him with a purse of fifty Louidores. At this sight he cried out, " Oh, my children ! thank these generous strangers ; and you my wife, my father, fall at their feet !" The whole family surrounded us, bestowing on us the most affecting marks of their gratitude, except the little girl, who, being ashamed to appear before so many strangers almost naked, crept into a corner, and did not venture to approach us. You may be certain nothing could divert my attention from my pupil : he observed every thing that passed with as much curiosity as emotion, and even wept at what he saw, without being sensible of it ; he kept leaning on my arm, and scarce allowed himself the liberty of breathing, that he might not lose a syllable of what was going forward. He observed the modest distress of the unfortunate little girl, and, quitting my arm, advanced towards her, took off his fur cloak, and, throwing it over her shoulders with a faltering voice, said, " I give you this cloak, now you may come forward." It is impossible for me to describe the joy I felt at this action. I ran to the Prince, and taking him in my arms, " Oh, my

“ my dear child, cried I, I am now well rewarded for all my tenderness and care.” I could say no more; tears stopped my speech! At this moment one of our servants arrived with a large bundle containing some common fur cloaks which I had ordered for the family. The Prince having given his own to the little girl, there was one more than was wanted; I gave it to him, saying, “ Keep it for ever, though it is neither so fine nor so warm as your own; for with what pleasure will you wear it, when it brings to your remembrance an action which does you so much honour.” The Prince put it on immediately; and never did he feel such joy and satisfaction on wearing the most elegant dress as he felt in this coarse and heavy cloak. During this time we were busied in getting *Alexis Stezin* removed to a convenient apartment in the first floor of the house. His father, wife, and children followed him; and, when we had fixed them in their new habitation, we left them saying, As soon as the poor man was well enough, we would conduct them to the farm into which we intended to put them. We did not arrive at the palace till past eight o’clock, and sat down to our fire-side again with a double pleasure, reflecting on the happiness we had procured for these miserable people. We sat up much later than usual. The Prince not being at all inclined to sleep, he found great pleasure in recollecting the most minute circumstances of this affecting evening; and I am very certain the remembrance will never be blotted from his memory. However, I would not have these kind of scenes too often repeated; for it would be very dangerous to accustom him to see such

such instances of wretchedness and misery. This weakens and destroys that sensibility which you should awaken in such a manner as to make a lasting impression. Thus you see bad effects might arise from good causes; where is the mind enough enlightened to stop at the exact point beyond which it ought not to go? At least this is what we should be aware of, in order to act with caution and prudence.

But to return to my pupil; before we went to bed, Mons. Sulback and I intreated him not to mention this adventure to any body, "Because we did "not chuse such a common act of humanity "should be known, as vanity had no share in it." The Prince promised to tell no one but his father, who you may suppose had already been acquainted with the story, and who had furnished us with the means of giving him so magnificent a lesson on benevolence. For it has cost more than twenty thousand livres; but it is a sum well spent, and what a powerful Sovereign and a good father can never regret. The next day the Prince, who was all impatience to see *Alexis Stezin* settled in his farm, sent to know how he did; and we heard with extreme satisfaction he was up and perfectly recovered. It was immediately settled that we should send them a carriage that very day to conduct them to the farm, and that we should go there also. We set out after dinner, and got there a little before their arrival. The Prince, of his own accord, carried them several presents, and waited their coming with the utmost impatience; as soon as he heard the carriage, he ran out hastily to meet it, and he afterwards followed them about to enjoy their surprize and happiness with a pleasure in his coun<sup>+</sup>

countenance which almost arose to transport. Before we went away the Prince came to me, and, throwing himself into my arms, cried out, "Oh! " my friend, how much I thank you for shewing " me such a sight as this! how happy must you " be in reflecting on the satisfaction of these " honest people!"—"Yes, said I, I am indeed " happy beyond expression, that I have made you " acquainted with this delight, and, when you " thoroughly enjoy it, it will afford me greater fe- " licity." One morning, about a week after this, Mons. Sulback and I being alone with the Prince, a person came to tell me that a very ingenious artist, whom we had heard of, desired to speak with me. I went to him, and returned immediately with a large drawing in crayons very elegantly framed. "Ah! cried I, our secret is betrayed, " here we are all represented at the house of *Alexis Stezin's*, pray look!" . . . At these words the Prince, amazed, looked at the picture, and saw, with emotion, that they had fixed on the moment when he was throwing his cloak over the little girl's shoulders. . . . . He blushed, and told me, indeed it was not owing to his indiscretion. I told him I believed it; nor had any of us mentioned it, yet I was not surprized at its being known. Why so? . . . . Because you was one of the party.—Well!— It is very true, the actions of Princes can never be concealed, too many people know them, and look out for them. I am not sorry the secret is discovered, as you have done a good action; had it been a bad one, it would have been equally known. This remark appeared to affect him; yet I saw he was much flattered with the painter's chusing the incident of the cloak for the principal subject of

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the picture. He looked at it with great satisfaction, and was much pleased with me for intending to send it to the Prince, his father, as he was then certain all the Court would see it. I the more readily forgave him this little piece of vanity, as it was the first he had shewn since this adventure. This, my dear Baron, is the History I had to give you. I make no apology for the prodigious length of my letter, because every thing you have done for your own children convinces me that whatever concerns Education must be interesting to you.

I have with great concern heard of the marriage of my niece! What a mother-in-law have they given her! . . . . You will judge whether I have not reason to grieve, knowing that Lady as I do, and recalling to my mind her dangerous and despicable qualities. But I flatter myself, my dear Baron, my sister will at least have the happiness of marrying her youngest daughter to her own satisfaction, and that I shall return to my own country to the wedding of *Constantia* and *Theodore*. Ah! if I can but see this so much wished-for union; and if the Prince should confirm the hopes I have entertained of him, what mortal on earth will be able to compare his happiness with mine?

## LETTER XLVIII.

Baron to the Viscount.

IT is very true, my dear Viscount, you would not know *Theodore* again. He has no longer that fair and delicate complexion which children in general have who are brought up at Paris. He is a head taller, and grown strong in proportion; and this alteration in him is not only owing to the pure air of this country, but to the active life he leads. He is equally accustomed to heat and cold, to sunshine and rain, without being incommoded by either, as we use him to these things by degrees and in moderation; for I have not had the cruelty to make him hazard the loss of his life, in order to strengthen his limbs. *Rousseau* is for taking no precautions of this kind with children, but allows them to fall and hurt themselves, and would expose them to the severity of the coldest weather. In doing thus, he runs into the very evil which he so strongly recommends you to avoid, that of making children unhappy. He says, afterwards, "What can be thought of this cruel method of education, where you sacrifice the present to an uncertain future?" — In the same book, he also says, "We should guard mankind from unforeseen accidents: let *Emilius* run about every morning in the coldest weather without shoes or stockings, either in his chamber, up and down stairs, or in the garden, and, far from being angry about it, I would imitate him," &c. &c.

This imitation is not so easy. For my part, I confess, I would not imitate *Theodore*, if in the

month of January he chose to walk in my park, without shoes or stockings. *Rousseau*, always desirous of "guarding his pupil against any sudden accidents," disturbs his rest, interrupts his sleep, and wakes him abruptly, to make him get up in the middle of the night. In short, *Emilius* appears to me to be the most tormented and the most unhappy child possible. Another of *Rousseau*'s sentiments to me appears still more dangerous : "Never permit your scholar," says he, "to value himself on his birth, his health, or his riches: but humble and alarm his vanity by shewing him the dangers by which mankind are surrounded; let him hear and attend to your description of the rocks against which he may be driven, and he will rely upon you to preserve him from them."

All this is in order to make him mild and compassionate! But for that purpose let us take another method; this will only make him a coward. In teaching him neither to value his health nor his riches, shew him the resources, which in the most dreadful reverse will remain to a man who has resolution and virtue. Describe this man to be brave, patient, and superior to his destiny; he will be so much more interesting, and your pupil will feel more compassion for him; but this pity, far from being contemptible, will give him more dignity and greatness of soul: his pity will become sublime, when it is united to admiration and esteem. In short, by this means your scholar will be deeply affected with the situation of the Hero, but he will not be terrified by it, and he will promise to support a similar fate with the same virtue, if he should ever meet with it. Adieu, my dear friend! I assure you, notwithstanding the happiness I enjoy here, I think, with great pleasure,

that

that in another twelvemonth we shall go from hence, and that that period will again unite us.

Mons. *d'Aimeri* went from hence yesterday with his grandson. He begins his journey to the North, where he has not been, and goes directly to \* \* \* \*. I have given him letters to the Count *de Roseville*, who I am sure will esteem him; for these two Gentlemen have both too much merit not to entertain a friendship for each other.

## LETTER XLIX.

*Baroness to the Viscountess.*

**A**DELAIDE and THEODORE, for this fortnight past, have been put to hard trials; but at length they have conquered them to my satisfaction. They have both been taught for a long time, how important it was to have a command over themselves, and how contemptible it was to fail in their promises.—*Adelaide* being nine, and *Theodore* ten years old, we thought that, after having tired them with several little matters, in almost all of which they behaved very well, we might risk one which was more serious, and now begin to make experiments on their virtue. It will be necessary to tell you, that, for these two or three mouths, the appearance of enmity between Miss *Bridget* and *d'Ainville* seemed to be greatly lessened. *D'Ainville* made the first advances, and Miss *Bridget* received them with proper dignity, but with complaisance; and their former quarrels seemed entirely forgotten. In short, *d'Ainville* declares publickly, that Miss *Bridget* is a person of real merit, and Miss

*Bridget* acknowledges that *d'Ainville* is a good young man in the main. It is from these circumstances that we formed our plan. You have not forgot *Adelaide*'s putting the profile of *Vespasian* in a part of her chamber, in order to ridicule *Miss Bridget*; and that this had in appearance greatly diminished her affection for *Adelaide*, as well as her confidence in her: and you ought also to know, that *Theodore* on his part had given *d'Ainville* much cause of complaint. Now I begin my story :

*Adelaide* observed one morning, that *Miss Bridget* was exceedingly grave and absent. She asked her the reason of it; *Miss Bridget* sighed, blushed, turned pale, appeared confused, but remained silent. The questions were repeated on one side; the confusion increased on the other. *Adelaide*'s curiosity was raised to the highest pitch. She begged, intreated, conjured. *Miss Bridget* hesitated, and said to her, Ah! if I could depend on your friendship, your discretion!.... What then? You fear me!.... I am very young, it is true; but I would sooner die than betray a secret. My dear *Miss Bridget*, you think me then a monster?.... Well then, I will tell you every thing this evening, if we are alone!.... Why not now?.... I cannot now: What I have to tell you will take up too much time!.... Oh, Heaven, must I wait till evening!.... You must indeed; and let me caution you, that from this moment, if you are guilty of the smallest imprudence, that is, if you betray any sign of wishing to be alone with me, or any other mark of impatience, I will not tell you a single word of the matter. Does mamma know it?.... No person in the world knows it. I shall certainly acquaint your mamma with it, but not these two or three months yet: so you see you

must not even mention it to her. You know she has often told you you must never betray, even to her, the secrets of another person.. It is true, she has said to you, that any thing intrusted to you, which she is not to know, does not look well, and you should be in doubt .... But you, Miss *Bridget*, that she esteems so much ! .... It is certain this makes a difference ; besides, I assure you she shall know it one day or other .... To every body else I will refuse to listen to a secret which mamma is not to know ; but .... You except this of mine, and is not that your meaning ? I think I may without scruple.— Well then, you give me your word to keep it faithfully ? .... I promise you .... That is sufficient .... At this instant the conversation was interrupted to the great concern of the impatient *Adelaide*. A servant came to tell her I wanted her, and she left Miss *Bridget* with an emotion which was still visible on her countenance, when she entered my chamber. During this time, *d'Ainville* had exactly the same conversation with my son, and received from him the same promise ; you may therefore suppose, that *Adelaide* and *Theodore* waited impatiently for their hour of walking ; but they were deceived in their hopes, we never left them a moment, and they went to bed without knowing the secret. *Adelaide*, while undressing, desired her maid to fetch Miss *Bridget* to her for one moment only. She returned for answer she could not come ; and poor *Adelaide* went to bed very melancholy. The next day Miss *Bridget* made her many reproaches. “ You have been guilty,” said she, “ of at least ten indiscretions. You sent “ for me last night; and you, who are always so “ happy with your mamma, had such an ap- “ pearance of trouble and impatience ; you looked

“ at me so earnestly ! In short, you seemed to  
“ think of no one else ! and every body observed  
“ that you did not behave as usual. I am there-  
“ fore determined to try you still more, before I  
“ trust you with my secret ; so that you will not  
“ know it till eight days hence, if, at the end of  
“ that time, I shall have no more cause to reproach  
“ you.” You may imagine this determination ap-  
peared very cruel, but there was no remedy ; and  
Theodore was obliged to submit to the same law.  
At last these eight long days were passed ; *Adelaide*  
and *Theodore* received the reward of their patience  
and discretion. The great secret is revealed ; and  
they have been informed, that Miss *Bridget* and  
*d'Ainville* have been privately married these two  
months ! You may easily guess the astonishment  
they were under at this intelligence. The only  
sensations they felt at first was the joy of being  
thought worthy to be told such an important secret ;  
but they presently found out, that some secrets are  
very difficult to be kept. The same evening, when  
I was alone with *Adelaide*, I want to tell you some-  
thing, said I, which will interest you. I am very  
busy in making a match for *d'Ainville*, which will  
be a good establishment for him. On hearing the  
word Match, she changed colour, which I did not  
appear to remark, but went on : I am going to  
marry him to a rich widow who lives at Carcassone.  
I have no doubt of his consent, and therefore I shall  
reserve the pleasure of surprising him with the news  
of it, when I have settled every thing. So that I  
I desire you will mention it to no one, not even to  
Miss *Bridget*..... Why do you blush, *Adelaide*?  
.... Who me, mamma?.... Yes, you have  
blushed every time I mentioned Miss *Bridget*'s  
name.... it is that.... You imagine perhaps,  
that

that Miss *Bridget* has still the same aversion for *d'Ainville*..... Oh no, mamma, on the contrary!..... How on the contrary! What would you say?..... Nothing, mamma..... Do you know any thing particular on that subject?..... But... as to me, I am convinced that Miss *Bridget* still retains some resentment against *d'Ainville*; but, whatever be the case, I forbid you to say a single word about this intended marriage. After these words I changed the conversation. *Adelaide* fell into a deep reverie, and, under some pretence or other, I sent her to Miss *Bridget*. She did not tell her of our conversation, but she intreated her with the greatest earnestness to inform me of it, and she offered her service to prepare me for the news. All this Miss *Bridget* absolutely refused. The next day, I was walking alone with *Adelaide*; I expressed a concern for her health. My dear child, said I, you are melancholy; what is the matter?..... Nothing, mamma.... Your thoughts seem much taken up, you are absent, what are you thinking of?..... Mamma!..... How, does this question confuse you?..... You have frequently assured me, and in this very garden, that you would never hesitate to tell me your most secret thoughts, let them be what they would, if I asked you.... Without an entire confidence, there can be no real affection.... So I would, mamma; I would tell you all my secrets.... Well then, what was you thinking of just now?..... Why don't you tell me?..... But what do I see, you weep!..... It is because I am not able to tell you..... Yet!..... But I must not tell you a lye..... What then is it?..... Mamma, ought I to tell you the secret of another person, when you ask me?..... Another person's secret; what then you

know a secret which I am ignorant of?.... Yes, mamma, and a very great secret..... I suppose it was by chance you discovered it?.... No, mamma, it was intrusted to me, and I gave my word of honour not to tell you of it.—And how could you engage to do so?... You was not sensible, that you either would be obliged to break your word, or to deceive me in not answering my questions with truth! Therefore you see how dangerous curiosity may prove!... Mamma, may I hope, that you will not ask me any more questions about it?.... Then it is necessary, with this curiosity, that you have more command over yourself, and that you do not appear so absent and your thoughts so much taken up. For, if you had the greatest prudence imaginable in this respect, how could you escape the single question which I asked you so often. *Adelaide*, what are you thinking of? You would always have deceived me by your answers. Deceive your mother! your only true friend, or break your word and discover your secret! — I thought, mamma, I might have been excused, if I owned I had a secret; and that, when you knew I had promised to keep it, you would not insist on my telling you.— But merely to confess you have a secret is always betraying half of it, and very frequently the whole. For example, how are you able to keep an important secret? From your father it cannot be, since he keeps nothing from me. As to your maid, I have forbid your ever talking to her on any subject; and it is impossible that it can be any man who has trusted you with a secret. Therefore it is very easy to discover that it can be nobody but Miss *Bridget* who has placed this confidence in you: and, having found out so much as that, the rest I may learn before the day

day is out. Thus you have not kept your promise, never to conceal any thing from me ; you have unthinkingly given your word of honour. You have for several days been guilty of a hundred indiscretions, and at last you discover the secret which has been deposited with you ! See how many faults are united ! And all for want of reflection, and because you could not resist the emotion of a foolish curiosity. This conversation ended by my positive order not to acquaint Miss *Bridget* with what had passed. I left her for eight days in an uncertainty, which was painful enough to a temper so curious and impatient as her's, whether I had come to an explanation with Miss *Bridget*, or whether she knew that I had got the secret out of *Adelaide*, or whether I was acquainted with the secret marriage, not daring to ask a question, and not being able to find out by our conduct she was in an uneasy suspense, which she could not very easily tell how to bear. But, having felt the force of her first faults, she had power enough over herself to be silent, and to appear with a calm and serene countenance. The time arrived, when the secret was to be made known. Miss *Bridget* took *Adelaide* by the hand, and, embracing her, said to her, the secret I confided to you is now no longer to be kept so, and I am going to acquaint you with the truth. As you had given me reason to doubt your friendship for me, I was desirous to put you to the proof, before I bestowed all mine on you : and therefore I intrusted you with an imaginary secret. You have kept it very well in some respects. You have not told your brother of it, nor have you given *d'Ainville* any suspicion of your knowing such a thing. You avoided telling your mamma of it ; at the same time you have carefully concealed from me, that

she had forbid you to tell me what she said, and you have convinced me that you are really interested in my happiness. All this is acting very nobly at your age, as you are not yet ten years old. I perceive you have a good head, and that you will be very prudent, when you are less governed by your curiosity, and have learned to have more command over yourself. What! cried *Adelaide*, are you not married then to M. *d'Ainville*? .... How could you suppose, if it was so, replied Miss *Bridget*, that I should have confided the secret to you in preference to telling it to your mamma? .... I have often told you, *Adelaide*, said I, that you should always be suspicious of any information you received which I was not to know; and with a little more reflection you might have guessed Miss *Bridget* only did it to try you, and that she knew too well the duty you owed to me to be able to endeavour to make you fail in it. Do you not see plainly what you was ignorant of before? And why? Because you was so much taken up with the desire of learning the secret: because you suffered your curiosity to get the better of your sense; and because that every passion, to which you give yourself up, takes away your judgment and makes you blind. I hope, my dear friend, you will forgive my troubling you with this long, and, in appearance, trifling account: but it will not be useless to you, if you really wish to adopt my method. This is the only certain way of succeeding in your lessons, and I shall put my child to every proof of this kind, in order to form her character, and strengthen her understanding. When she comes into company, she will know by her own experience, and without having learned it at the expence of her happiness or reputation, all the

the inconveniences of giddiness, eagerness, indiscretion, curiosity, weakness, &c. in short, she will know how to conquer her passions. *Theodore* will receive the same instructions: he has gone through all the same trials which I have told you of *Adelaide*, and has behaved still better than she has, for he never gave the least cause of suspicion, that he had been trusted with a great secret. But he is a year older than his sister, and, when children have a good education, a year makes a great difference.

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## LETTER L.

*Madame d'Ostalis to the Baroneſſeſſ.*

Ι AM this day, my dear aunt, three-and-twenty years old; and I cannot celebrate my birth-day better than in conversing with you; but, when I think, that for these three long years I have been separated from you, and that I shall still be deprived of the happiness of seeing you for another twelve-month, my heart is very melancholy.... The only thing which I receive consolation from is the thought of having conducted myself at this distance from you in the same manner as if you was always with me; in short, the having exactly followed the rules you gave me, and the advice which you have constantly pointed out to me in your letters, those dear letters in which I find so much to make me amends for the distance which is between us. You will never be told on your return to Paris, that your child is guilty of coquetry; this odious vice, for which you have given me so just

and so serious an aversion. I have never turned the brain of any one, and I can even boast, that it has never been said, that any person has fallen in love with me. It is true, I have followed your advice, and always preserved a proper behaviour, with that mild tranquillity which you recommended to me; that I have made use of no arts, and have never gone into company by myself, that is, without my mother-in-law, till within these two years; and almost always with Mons. *d'Ostalis*: that I never received company at my own house till last year, and that those I associate with are very sensible as well as reasonable people; that I neither go to Balls nor Operas, nor ride on horseback: and therefore it is not astonishing, that I should have preserved my reputation without blemish. This is a cause of great happiness to me, and I value it at too high a price not to endeavour to keep it.

I have no satisfactory intelligence to give you of Madame *de Valey*. Madame *de Limours* is blinded towards her in every particular. She is persuaded that she loves her husband tenderly, but I do not believe a word of it. She is already the greatest coquette you ever saw, and, when her mother is not present, she boasts of it: and is weak enough to think that this confession is infinitely graceful, and that it shews her to be possessed of a most amiable frankness. I think, my dear aunt, you will not find this frankness much to your taste; in my opinion, it appears both indelicate and absurd. She has altered that stiff formal appearance she put on, on her being married. She is now frisking and fluttering about, seems to be all life, and her head appears to be the perpetual motion. I think, if I was inclined to coquetry, I should rather attempt

to

to please by my understanding and conversation than my person. But Madame *de Valey* takes a quite contrary method. To give you some idea of it, I will relate to you an account of a breakfast which we had yesterday at Madame *de Limours*. There were only four Ladies of us, Madame *de Limours*, Madame *de Valey*, myself, and Madame *de Germeiul*, a young woman about my age, married about four years, neither beautiful nor amiable; but she has an elegant figure, and has some gracefulness in her manner, though very inconsiderate and giddy, and full of affectation. Madame *de Valey* is intimately attached to her, for these six months past. We were moderately gay at breakfast, when Madame *de Limours* received a letter which called her out of the room. She desired me, in her absence, to be her daughter's Chaperon. The moment after she was gone, the Marquis *de L*— and the Chevalier *Creni* were announced — It is reported, that the latter is in love with Madame *de Valey*, and that the Marquis is likewise attached to Madame *de Germeiul*. I was seated between these two Ladies, and immediately took notice of their behaviour which was wonderfully changed. Madame *de Valey* appeared all at once to have a violent affection for me! She embraced me, affected to whisper in my ear continually, as if to tell me a secret, when she only said things of no kind of consequence, and then burst into violent fits of laughter. All this was accompanied with such motions of the head as is impossible to describe, but from which I suffered great inconvenience, for every moment I found her feathers and her braid in my face. At length, seeing that I was very cool, and did not return her great and sudden friendship, she rose from her seat

seat with Madame *de Germeiul*, and they walked arm in arm up and down the room, for six or eight minutes, with great carelessness. They then seated themselves on a sopha in a studied attitude, in order that it might be said, that they formed a most beautiful picture.

At length I returned home without being able to comprehend how people can be so stupid as to suppose they can make conquests by such ridiculous means. I should rather prefer the coquetry of an English Lady, whom Mons. *de Herbain* met with in his travels ; she was very beautiful, but through a strange caprice she disdained a conquest which was only obtained by her person : and, when she wished any one to fall in love with her, she renounced dress, and concealed her fine hair, and half her face, under a large hat ; and, covering herself with a cloak, she hid from their sight the most elegant shape in the world. But she took care to display all the charms of her mind, and by the insinuating graces of her conversation, and the delicacy of her wit, she triumphs over the most beautiful or best dressed rivals in the world. By this means, added the Chevalier *de Herbain*, this dangerous coquette was not content with slight attentions, but inspired her admirers with serious and lasting passions. Adieu, my dear aunt ! I am going this moment to Versailles. I shall return the day after to-morrow, and will then write to you again, and send you the little box of Music which you asked me for — They send for me, they wait for me. Adieu ! your child embraces you as tenderly as she loves you.

## LETTER LI.

*From the Viscountess to the Baroness.*

I AM every day more pleased with my situation, my dear friend ; at least I am so with my daughter, for my happiness depends on her conduct and her affection for me. I told you all the little causes of complaint I had against her, on her first being married. But those little clouds are now vanished, and I begin to believe, that, in doubting her sensibility, mine has often made me unjust. She loves her husband passionately. In general, all the emotions of her heart are violent : and tho' these tempers may be more dangerous than others, you must agree that they are the only ones that are formed for attachments. I ought to applaud myself for having given her to the man of her choice : a person so impetuous, open, and with such lively passions as she has, could never have supported an engagement contrary to her inclinations. She, who could never bear the slightest contradiction, even in the most trifling matters ! She has many faults, I confess, but they are chiefly owing to her vivacity and the little dissimulation of which she is capable. You have known me suspect her of falsehood on some occasions, and it gave me great affliction. Thank Heaven, I was deceived ; and, as she herself tells me, what I was inclined to attribute to artifice was merely owing to her being inconsiderate and giddy ; and, in fact, these are her principal faults ; and, her heart, besides, is very susceptible of good impressions, and will yield to them. She has made choice of a friend, and loves

loves her to excess. This friend is a few years older than herself, has been married about four years, and is equally distinguished by her birth, situation, and agreeable behaviour. It is with great pleasure that I observe my daughter giving herself up to all the enthusiasm of a first friendship. But at present let us talk of an object which is still more interesting to you, since you mean one day or other to adopt her for your own: *Constantia* will not have the striking charms of her sister; her beauty is of the softer kind; her gentle and ingenuous disposition, together with a constant sweetness of temper, makes every body delighted with her: her understanding is infinitely above the age of seven years. She has great sensibility, but is timid and bashful, always the same, always serious, fearful, and submissive; so that, in spite of her beauty, she seems more formed to be loved than admired. I think her temper and disposition would suit you exactly; and that you will find her an artless, sensible, and amiable girl; which appears to me to be all we wish. May she insure the happiness of our beloved *Theodore*, and we shall then be still more united than ever, applaud ourselves, and enjoy together a general felicity! Ah, my dear friend! these happy days are still at a distance! . . . And, waiting for their arrival, what sacrifices have you made! I admire them, but I sigh and complain of them more and more. I have neither your courage, your enthusiasm, nor your philosophy, to enable me to support myself properly. Adieu! forgive me this weakness, on account of the tender affection which occasions it.

## LETTER LII.

*Answer from the Baroneess.*

I CONGRATULATE you, my dear friend, on the happiness you enjoy at this time. Certain of possessing your daughter's affections, I think with you, that you ought to bear with and excuse her faults; her loving you will be sufficient. When she grows older, her temper will insensibly improve. You tell me she has made choice of an intimate friend. Allow me to give you some remarks on that subject, which I formerly made, when I had opportunities of observing what passed in society. This part of your letter brings it back to my mind, and perhaps it may be of use to you. It is by lavishing the sacred names of friendship and confidence, on all those transient and trifling attachments we are continually forming, that we are come almost to doubt whether such a sentiment as friendship exists at all. This rapid succession of lively and tumultuous emotions exhausts and hardens the heart, without being able to affect it. Fickleness proceeds from want of affection; we wish to attach ourselves, we change with the hope or prospect of making a better choice, and our lives pass away, in seeking, what at last we imagine is no-where to be met with, because we have not found it. These errors proceed from our own prejudices, and are every day increasing. One real attachment is sufficient for our hearts. But people persuade us we should have several at the same time. So, to make happiness more uncommon, they establish differences which do not exist, and

and give to the same sentiment an infinity of names. They divide it also into many branches, and they assure us, that perfect felicity consists in finding objects to fill this numerous list. I am going to make you a calculation according to these received notions. A young woman, taught to think in this manner, knows, if she does not love her husband, that she ought to be in love, and therefore she looks out for lover ; she also knows, that she should feel a tender affection for her relations, which is a different sentiment from that of friendship ; she visits them, and pays them all proper attentions, which is the whole of what they expect from her. She has brothers and sisters ; the affection she feels for them is called by a particular name, but all these are not sufficient ; she must, besides, have a faithful friend. Sympathy comes to her assistance, and, at the end of six months, she perhaps meets with this person worthy to possess all her confidence. But, not contented with one, she must have what are called *friends*, for they distinguish between your particular friend and your friends. The latter are only intitled to half your confidence, or the secrets of the moment. If they are ill, you must go and shut yourselves up with them, to take care of them. There ought to be five or six of them, all equal both in rank and privileges, and inferior only to your particular friend. So you see there are two sorts of friendship distinct from each other, without reckoning the ties of relationship, or the passion of love. Your affection for your intimate friend is to last for ever. You must wear her picture, and have bracelets with her hair. You are never without three or four secrets to whisper in her ear, whenever you meet, even if you have not

not left her a quarter of an hour: and you are never invited to a supper, unless she is of the party. But, as to your other friends, you only feel for them a kind of a tranquil and tender regard founded on esteem and convenience, which has nothing violent in it. If one should chance to be possessed of a little cunning, there is another sentiment, which is called interest. This may fall on about a dozen people of our acquaintance, whom we select on account of their superior rank or fortune: and this will require us, during their absence, to write a letter to them once a month, or, if they are sick, one must send to know how they do, two or three times a day; and, in case of their death, one must absent one's self from public places, for at least the remainder of the week. All these ceremonies are marked so exactly and followed so strictly, that it is easy to see they have been learned from infancy, and that education and custom have fixed them in the memory. Is it not as strange as it is ridiculous, that a young person, who finds in her own family objects which ought so naturally to engage her affections, should go among strangers, to form those idle and trifling connexions, which, without having power to make her amends, by degrees insensibly estrange her for ever from all those persons whom she ought to love best? .... Believe me, it is not a friend, that people seek for at eighteen: it is not a guide and adviser they wish for, because they may find those in a mother or a husband. But these they neglect. They only wish to form a connexion that may be taken notice of: they chuse a person most admired and most in fashion to fix their affection on. But, above all, they want a kind, complying confidant, and this it is that makes people suspect, when they

they see two young women so very intimate, that they are concerned together in some imprudent affair. They begin by communicating to each other all the little secrets of their passed life, till by degrees their imaginations are heated, and, to shew they have the strictest confidence in each other, they betray their inmost thoughts, particularly on the subject of love: and their communications are generally exaggerated, and give false ideas of the conquests they have made. In these little Histories their vanity frequently alters the facts, and often conceals the truth. They acquire a taste for intrigue and a habit of telling lies; and they use themselves to this practice, in order to give their friend, whom they care for no longer than she will listen to them, all these proofs of their lively and passionate attachment. From what I have observed, I should think it right to point out to young people, by mild and gentle means, the folly and absurdity of forming such attachments which they are so fond of. Adieu, my dear friend! A letter from you is just brought me; I shall therefore finish this without regret, as I am not going to quit you altogether.

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## LETTER. LIII.

*From the same to the same.*

WHAT attention ought one to pay to children, even in the most trifling things!.... *Adelaide* almost always tells truth. Education has confirmed this virtue in her, she never attempts the smallest disguise to try to hide any of her

her faults ; and yet, notwithstanding this, I have found her, for some days past, making stories from the gaiety of her heart ; and, to amuse herself, *d'Ainville* last week was relating to us a very comical dream which he had, and at which we laughed very much. The next day *Adelaide* dreamt also, and acquainted me with her dream, to which I paid little attention ; and, two days after, she had another : and, in short, this morning, she has related so pretty a tale, that I am convinced she composed it at her leisure, and she has since acknowledged, that she invented them all. I had no great difficulty to make her understand, if it is wicked to tell lyes for the sake of interest, it is still more inexcusable to do it without any motive. I have often told you, said I, what a mean and detestable vice lying is, and how much it is despised. I must tell you yet more, that those who are guilty of it can never be esteemed, nor thought amiable. There are numbers of people who amuse themselves by composing Histories, which without any scruple they pass off for truth, because they do no harm to any body. These people have no other intention in exaggerating and in telling lyes, but to entertain their acquaintance, and make themselves agreeable in company ; but they mistake the natter, and dishonour themselves by it in the most ridiculous and foolish manner : and a man, who tells lyes in this way, for his own pleasure, is never believed in any thing. Whatever he says, let it be ever so agreeable, can never interest you, because he never can raise your attention or gain your confidence ; and he is, indeed, scarcely listened to. While persons of veracity, supposing even they have not much understanding, if they have any thing extraordinary to relate, are always listened

listened to with attention, and heard with pleasure. Besides, the esteem we have for such characters, the certainty that one may believe all they say makes their conversation interesting, and their company agreeable. And, were they only possessed of this single virtue, they would be esteemed and sought after. After these observations, I requested *Adelaide* to compose no more dreams for the future.

I have just received a letter from Madame *d'Ostalis*, in which she speaks of nothing but our charming little *Constantia*; she tells me she is amazingly improved, and that she is beautiful as an Angel. I am almost sorry for it. To be sure extreme ugliness is a real misfortune, but perfect beauty is a gift of Nature, always dangerous, and frequently pernicious and fatal! A person of perfect beauty, who draws all eyes upon her, is judged with the greatest severity, even when jealousy is out of the question. Curiosity, which is natural to us, seeks to find out, if this object who charms us so much possesses other qualities which we wish to find in her. Even a good and gentle mind will experience this sentiment; the beauty, which charms us so much at the sight of it, will give us a desire to know more of her. This disinterested idea keeps us from distrust. We do not consider, that love and hatred are equally blind, that indifference examines nothing, and that benevolence alone is just and clear-sighted; and that this is the general opinion. Therefore it is, that an advantage, so valuable in appearance, is in fact very dangerous. It is much the same thing in another way, as with a man in a humble situation raised to superior rank. Every eye is fixed upon him with the intention of discovering his most trifling

trifling faults ; and, while flattery is paying homage to him, hatred and calumny endeavour to blacken and dishonour him, and truth itself unveils and accuses him. All his faults are observed, repeated, and exaggerated. Take from him this shining title which has decorated and exposed him, and half of his faults will be unknown ; nobody will give themselves the trouble of discovering his vices, they will remain secret in his heart, and the actions he wishes to conceal will never be brought into day-light. It is very seldom that a woman perfectly beautiful is in other respects amiable. She thinks Nature has done every thing for her ; that it is sufficient for her to be seen, in order to enchant and seduce ; and that no other qualities are half so estimable. With these sentiments she goes into company, and all her success depends on the impression she makes at first sight ; these uncertain effects, which cannot be lasting, only leave behind them indifference, insipidity, and often disgust. With her the mind has no employment, the heart is cold, and it is a very true observation, " that the most tender attachments are seldom inspired by the most beautiful persons."

A figure which has nothing disgusting in it, a countenance which marks the character, and points out sense or good humour, these are the most desirable qualities ; and add to these the graces of the mind, gentleness of manners and sense, without affectation, and you will see whether beauty alone will ever be able to dispute the prize. Therefore, my dear friend, redouble your attentions to *Constantia*, be sure to convince her, that beauty can never supply the place of other amiable qualities, when she comes into company. That it will only expose her to the cruel envy of women,

women, and the impertinence of the men ; and that, in attracting the general notice, she will only be a means of drawing on herself observations on her errors and foibles which would not otherwise have been seen : but that it is in her power to make modesty still more interesting, and to give to virtue a still more brilliant appearance. Do not endeavour to conceal from her that she is beautiful ; it is a thing impossible to hide. Talk of it with coldness and indifference, without appearing to set any kind of value on it. At the same time tell her, if she should preserve it, which is very uncertain, till she is five-and-twenty, that she will see a hundred in that space of time, that may not have such regular beauty as she, who will be greatly preferred by being more in the fashion and taste of the world. Did we not see that Madame *de Gerville* passed at one time for the prettiest creature in the world; in spite of the song which criticized so dreadfully, but, at the same time so justly, her shape, her teeth, her complexion, her mouth, and her nose?—As nobody is absolutely perfect, when you do not conceal from her that she is handsome, tell her also as freely, the faults which may be found with her, that she may not look upon herself as a miracle of beauty : and let her be used to hear herself criticized, without shewing spite or vexation. And to effect this, make your remarks on her little imperfections, not with an air of concern, but as if it was a matter of indifference. *Adelaide* is really very pretty, and she knows it, but never seems to think about it. Some days ago, I gave a dinner to almost all my neighbours. The company was very brilliant, *Adelaide* was well dressed, and looked remarkably handsome. All the guests cried out, how

how beautiful she was ! and that they had never seen any thing so lovely or so agreeable. In the evening, when we were alone, Miss Bridget asked me the name of the Nobleman who sat on my right hand, and whose conversation appeared to interest me very much ; I answered, he was called M. *de Lorme* ; that he had travelled a great deal, and was very sensible and agreeable. But a little severe, said Miss Bridget ; and there happened to me a droll adventure, which I shall tell you of without hesitation, before Mademoiselle *Adelaide*, who I am sure will be the first to laugh at it. I lay a wager, added Mons. *d'Almane*, you heard him say he did not think *Adelaide* pretty. Oh ! that, said Miss Bridget, would not be worth relating, for every one to their taste ; and, if Mademoiselle were as beautiful as an Angel, she would not please every body ; but that Mons. *de Lorme* should have selected me for his confidant on this subject is very remarkable. He took me for one of the neighbouring Ladies, and, half an hour before dinner, while the company were all in the Saloon, I was walking on the terras, where he joined me, and entered into conversation. I asked him what he thought of Mademoiselle *Adelaide*'s explanation of the Historical Pictures in the Saloon and other rooms ? I think it wonderful, said he, and what I have admired above all is, that she explains them without any affectation of learning, and only speaks when she is questioned. She will do well to preserve this modest simplicity, for, without these qualities, let her have ever so much knowledge, she will only appear troublesome and tiresome, and at the same time ridiculous. This, continued he, is what I would have wished they had found this young person to applaud, instead

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of admiring her person, as they did; which, in my opinion, is nothing extraordinary. Indeed, said I, they give her very trifling praises: it is true, that she is very pretty; but, .... Pretty,— interrupted he, I do not think so at all. She is a little figure, without any regularity, with a pleasing look, which is, however, very common; and I do assure you, the greatest part of the company, who have declared her so lovely, do not think so in reality. I am above this ridiculous flattery, I assure you; and I much wish this child, whom I really admire, on account of her education, should know how little truth there is in such compliments as they have paid her, and how injurious they are to the person to whom they are addressed, for they must suppose her very vain, and very silly to believe it, and be delighted with it. This discourse appeared to me to be very sensible, and I should have liked to have prolonged it; but Mademoiselle *Adelaide* came to tell me dinner was on the table. By the manner in which she spoke, Mons. *de Lorme* found I belonged to the family; and Mademoiselle *Adelaide* might perceive that he appeared much confused, and that I spoke very softly to him, because he begged me not to betray him, which I promised I would not. So then he thought, said *Adelaide*, if I knew he did not think me handsome, I should be grieved. I wish he was to know the truth of this matter!

.... *Adelaide* is much in the right, said I. But how can it be done? He will not come here again, and he leaves the country in two days. Miss *Briget*, said Mons. *d'Almane*, must write him a letter, and, as he is a man of great merit, and is besides fifty years old, *Adelaide* may, if her mother will permit her, add a few lines from herself in the

letter. I approved of this scheme, but *Adelaide* had some difficulty to consent to it, as she was afraid of not spelling quite properly. However, at last, Miss *Bridget* prevailed on her, and when she had wrote her own letter, in which she acquainted Mons. *de Lorme* that she had found his remarks so very just, that she could not help telling them to her young friend. *Adelaide* shut herself up in her closet to add her few lines. She staid there a long time, and, when she came out, she blushed exceedingly, and brought us the letter in her hand, which was extremely well written, and was as follows :

“ It is very true, Sir, I am neither surprised, nor  
“ angry, that you did not think me handsome;  
“ this might very well happen, and, when I am  
“ flattered, and told I am pretty, I often think it  
“ is done to make a joke of me. I had much ra-  
“ ther be praised for the little knowledge I have  
“ gained, and for the qualities of my mind, be-  
“ cause, that is praising my mamma, as well as  
“ me. I intreat you, Sir, not to think me a  
“ young girl of an absurd and frivolous turn.  
“ With such a mother as I have, I can never be  
“ either one or the other.”

I approved this billet very much, and we sent it immediately by a postilion, with orders to carry it to Mons. *de Lorme*, who was to spend a day or two at a friend's house about two leagues from hence. *Adelaide* was impatient for his return, which he did about nine o'clock with Mons. *de Lorme*'s answer, which I send you :

“ Madam, I cannot believe that Miss *Bridget*  
“ has told you I thought you plain. I think I  
“ could never have made use of such an expres-  
“ sion. I do not like to exaggerate any thing,

“ and especially when it would be unpolite and  
“ disobliging. I even think your person may be  
“ called very pleasing; for taste and opinions  
“ have not settled ideas relative to beauty or ugliness;  
“ persons judge variously, and frequently  
“ the most indifferent face is preferred to the  
“ most beautiful; and this proves, that those who  
“ wish for general admiration, merely on account  
“ of their beauty, are equally absurd and ridiculous.  
“ But you, Madam, will never be one of  
“ these: it is by the sweetness of your temper,  
“ by your mildness, your steadiness, your sense,  
“ and your talents, that you wish to please; and,  
“ if you go on improving with the education you  
“ will have, you will make one of the most  
“ distinguished as well as one of the most pleasing  
“ persons in society: and perhaps, in eight or  
“ ten years, chance may procure me the happiness  
“ of meeting you, when I shall with great  
“ pleasure see my predictions verified.”

*Adelaide* was very well satisfied with this letter, which she said she should keep and read over from time to time. She added, Mons. *de Lorme* was not a very polite man, but that he had a great deal of prudence and good sense. You cannot think, my dear friend, how very amusing this kind of lessons is. Instead of preaching long sermons, which tire both the speaker and the hearer, we invent these pretty plans, which we bring into action, and perform the principal parts without the trouble of getting them by heart; and, I assure you, these little Comedies, which sometimes engage us for ten or twelve days, both interest and entertain us more than you have any idea of.

## LETTER. LIV.

*The Count de Roseville to the Baron.*

I AM going to inform you of such an extraordinary event, my dear Baron, that I would not delay a moment writing to you, particularly, as Mons. *d'Aimeri* is the principal person concerned in my History. The friendship you have for him would have been sufficient to have made me regard him. But his great merit, and the dreadful misfortunes he has met with, have given him a right to my most tender friendship, which he will ever possess. I guess what your curiosity must be, and I will satisfy it. Mons. *de Aimeri* arrived here about ten days ago. After what you wrote to me about him, I took a lodging for him at a friend's house, and, the evening he came here, I went to make him a visit. A slight indisposition obliged him to keep his chamber a few days, at the end of which he went over the city, and saw every thing that was curious in it; people mentioned to him the house of Mons. *d'Anglures*, as being well worth his seeing. He wished much to go there to visit this extraordinary and benevolent man, whom I have already mentioned to you. As I am very intimate with him, I promised Mons. *d'Aimeri* to carry him thither. We went the next day, as soon as we had dined, Mons. *d'Aimeri*, *Charles*, and myself, in the same carriage. When we had got there, we were told Mons. *d'Anglures* was gone to take a walk in the fields, but that he would certainly be at home presently, and we were desired to walk into his apartments. About half an hour

after, finding Mons. *d'Aimeri* was much engaged by a Cabinet of Natural History, I offered to conduct his grandson into the gardens, which were well worth viewing, and of which I will give you an account in my next letter. We had scarce left the house, when a servant came to tell us that Mons. *d'Anglures* was returned from his walk, and was looking for us. At that instant we saw him coming to join us. He had no sooner cast his eyes on *Charles*, than I perceived a great alteration in his countenance; he looked at him with an air of astonishment and tenderness, and, after a moment's silence, he cried out, My God, what a likeness! . . . . And, turning his head, he wiped his eyes, which were filled with tears. He then came up to *Charles*, and, taking him by the hand, pardon, said he, my curiosity, but . . . . How old are you? . . . . Fifteen years and a half, replied *Charles*. . . . Oh, Heaven, said Mons. *d'Anglures*, the very sound of her voice! . . . . Ah, Sir, said he, addressing himself to me, who is this young man, what is his name? . . . . The Chevalier *de Valmont*. . . . I had no sooner mentioned his name, than Mons. *d'Anglures* took *Charles* in his arms, and pressed him to his bosom with such transport as would have made me easily guess the cause, had I known more of Mons. *d'Aimeri*'s story; but, not being acquainted with any of the particulars of it, I regarded this scene with inexpressible surprise. When Mons. *d'Anglures* turned to me, and said, you shall know this very day, the cause of the situation in which you see me; you shall learn it, and you will pity me: I am sure you will! . . . . But who does this dear child travel with! Is it with a Governor? No, said I, with his grand-father . . . . His grand-father,

ther, said Mons. *d'Anglures*, with a frantic air ! . . . . Yes, Mons. *d'Aimeri* . . . . What do you say, interrupted he, is Mons. *d'Aimeri* here ? Is he now in my house ! . . . . He pronounced these words in so loud a voice, and at the same time so faltering, and with anger so strongly painted in his eyes, which were still filled with tears, that I plainly saw, if he had met with an interesting and beloved object in *Charles*, he had also found a detested enemy in Mons. *d'Aimeri*. I hope, said I, to him, you will remember the rights of hospitality, and that you will do nothing contrary to the high opinion I have of your sense and virtue. Ah ! if you knew, cried he . . . . He stopped, appeared to reflect a moment, and, turning his eyes on *Charles*, his rage, instead of lessening, seemed to collect new strength ; and *Charles*, who till then had remained motionless, at last broke silence : Sir, said he, do you know my grand-father, and can you have any complaint against him ? If so, I am ready to offer in his name any satisfaction which you can desire . . . . Generous boy, interrupted Mons. *d'Anglures*, embracing him ! But let me ask you once more, said *Charles*, do you know my grand-father ? . . . . Mons. *d'Anglures* took a moment to reply, then, assuming a milder air, he does not know me, said he, as you will find. But, by a strange fatality, his name brings to my mind the most dreadful events : I wish to see him instantly. Wait for us in the garden. No, no, interrupted *Charles*, with great quickness, you shall not see him but in my company . . . . Young man, replied Mons. *d'Anglures*, with a little severity, I forgive the unkind fears you entertain of me ; it is a respectable cause which inspires you with it. But remember, I consent that

the Count *de Roseville* shall be witness to this interview; besides that, I am in my own house, and, supposing it to be true that Mons. *d'Aimeri* is my enemy, he would always find here a sacred asylum. Mons. *d'Anglures* is right, said I, and I think Mons. *d'Aimeri* himself would blame you for the words you have just made use of. Stay here, therefore, and in a quarter of an hour we will return to you again. At these words we quitted *Charles*, who was not yet intirely freed from his tears. For my part, I was surprised and confused at every thing I had seen and heard, and waited with some concern, and extreme curiosity, to see how this affair would end. I did not venture to ask Mons. *d'Anglures* any questions. But, on entering the house, he said, go, my dear Count, and see for Mons. *d'Aimeri*; I only request you will not say a word to him of what has passed. I will not, said I. Then, said he, wait, till I send for you. He then left me without giving me time to answer him. I found Mons. *d'Aimeri* where I had left him in the room, and he was so busily employed with the study of Natural History, that he did not even perceive that I was returned without his grandson. In about ten minutes a servant came to inform us that Mons. *d'Anglures* waited for us in another room. This invitation gave me some pain; but Mons. *d'Aimeri*, always absent, did not take notice of it. I took him by the arm, and we followed the servant, who led us through several apartments, and came at last to the door of another, where he stopped, gave us the key, and then left us. I immediately unlocked it, and went in first. I thought I had been acquainted with all the house, which I had been over fifty times. But I saw with astonishment, that this apartment,

as

as remarkable as it was magnificent, was intirely unknown to me ; the walls and the floor were marble of the most dazzling whiteness, and, at the end opposite the door, were four grand pillars of porphyry, supporting a canopy of silver stuff, ornamented with silver fringe, before which were fastened curtains of gauze, which, being then drawn close, concealed the whole of the pavilion. But, the moment Mons. *d'Aimeri* appeared in the room, the curtains were drawn up, and we discovered M. *d'Anglures*, who, addressing himself to Monsieur *d'Aimeri*, said to him in a dreadful voice : Lift up your eyes, barbarian, and contemplate the work of your hands ! . . . . Mons. *d'Aimeri* trembled, and cast his eyes on the affecting object, which was to tear open all the wounds of his heart . . . . He saw, standing on a pedestal of white marble, a statue representing Fidelity bathed in tears. She held in one hand some long and beautiful ringlets of flaxen hair, and in the other a letter half folded, of which no words could be seen but the name, written in large letters of gold, of *Cecilia*. At the sight of this, your unhappy friend, petrified with astonishment, and overwhelmed with grief, remained a moment quite motionless. Then casting his eyes towards Mons. *d'Anglures*, he trembled, he shook, and supporting himself against one of the pillars : What, said he, the Chevalier *de Merville* ! . . . . Yes ! himself, interrupted the Chevalier ; I am that unfortunate man, thy most implacable enemy . . . . Oh, my daughter ! . . . . cried Mons. *d'Aimeri* ! He could not say more, his sobs deprived him of speech. *Inhuman !* replied Mons. *d'Anglures*, *of what happiness has thy execrable ambition deprived me !* It is just, that this ambition should at length serve to double your confusion

and remorse. Think of the fortune I possess, of these riches which I despise, and which I could never know the value of, but in sharing them with the object I adored. The innocent victim of thy cruelty, as sensible of her misfortune as I was; for, alas! if you are still ignorant of it, learn now, that she loved me! .... Yes, barbarian, *Cecilia* loved me, and in spite of thy unheard of cruelty, it is she who ordered me "to respect thy life!" It is she alone who could have kept back this wretched arm .... I abandoned my country; I came to the farthermost part of the North, to seek in vain the repose which you have taken from me for ever! .... One only friend, that I have left at Paris, every year gives me an account of *Cecilia*; I know that she still lives .... return thanks to Heaven .... For, as long as she exists, you have nothing to fear from my resentment; but .... Ah! then, interrupted Mons. *d'Aimeri*, satisfy your revenge .... Your friend deceives you .... *Cecilia* is no more! .... She is no more! cried the Chevalier *de Murville*; *Cecilia* dead, and you still breathe! .... At these words, astonished, and almost frantic, he advanced fiercely towards M. *d'Aimeri* .... I threw myself between them at this moment. *Charles*, led by his anxiety, entered suddenly, and, seeing me holding the Chevalier's arm, cried, why do you deceive me? What is the meaning of this furious passion! .... If my grandfather is the object of it, it is I that demand the cause of it.... These words brought the Chevalier *de Murville* again to himself. The countenance of *Charles*, and the sound of his voice, was to him an irresistible charm. Tenderness took place of his rage; his eyes were filled with tears, and turning towards Mons. *d'Aimeri*; ah! cried he, give

give me this child, and I will forgive you the evils with which you have imbibed my life! ... M. *d'Aimeri*, far from being able to answer him, did not even hear him. Plunged into the deepest reverie, his eyes fixed on the hair of his unhappy daughter, he was wholly taken up with that melancholy object. I approached him, and seizing hold of his arm: Come, said I, let us leave Mons. *de Murville* to his own reflections, doubtless he will soon reproach himself with having aggravated grief, a thousand times more painful than his own. Yes, Sir, continued I, going up to the Chevalier, I was ignorant both of your name and your passion for the unfortunate *Cecilia*; but, I know, that it was in the arms of her father that she gave her last sigh: and that this unhappy father, inconsolable for her loss, weighed down with sorrow and regret, could not have supported life, but for the sake of this young man... The nephew of *Cecilia*, and the only son which Heaven has left him... What then, replied the Chevalier, his son is dead! ... And he laments *Cecilia*! ... Ah! if he is unhappy, I am the only person guilty!... Cease to reproach yourself, cried Mons. *d'Aimeri*, for an anger which appears to me to be the effect of the wrath of Heaven which pursues me... It is true, that strong resentments last for ever in generous souls. You ought never to pardon me, and I should excuse every thing you have done. At these words, Mons. *d'Aimeri*, leaning on *Charles's* arm, and supported by me on the other side, left the house. You will easily conceive the deep and melancholy impressions this scene produced on M. *d'Aimeri*; I brought him back to \* \* \* \* \* in a situation truly worthy of pity. I spent the evening with him, and he related to me, before the Chevalier

valier *de Valmont*, all his History; and ended by this advice, which he addressed to his grandson: " You may one day be a father, said he. Take care never to prefer one child to another, as an object of greater tenderness; restrain yourself from a sentiment of preference, which soon will plunge you into a fatal blindness, for the errors and vices of this favourite child, and will make you cruel and unjust to all the others."

The next day, I returned alone to the Chevalier *de Murville*, whom I found in the greatest grief, and reproaching himself with his behaviour the night before. I made him still more wretched by the account Mons. *d'Aimeri* had given me of all that had happened. He was drowned in tears at the recital of what passed at the cottage where *Cecilia* received the fatal impression which cost her her life. And you may easily suppose what he must feel, on hearing the account of her sickness and death! After answering all his questions, I asked him some in my turn. He told me he had changed his name, and quitted his country, in order that *Cecilia* should never hear of him; and also that he might never meet with Mons. *d'Aimeri*. That he kept up a correspondence in France with only one person; but that he had intreated him never to mention the name of Mons. *d'Aimeri*. That time and reflection, though they had calmed the tumults of his despair, had not abated his passion; and that *Cecilia* would live for ever in his heart. That, in short, the desire he had to appear worthy the goodness and confidence of a great Prince had given birth to some seeds of ambition in his heart; but that he had only received true consolation in solitude, study, and in the pleasures of benevolence. Before we parted, he wrote a letter

letter to Mons. *d'Aimeri* filled with the most affecting excuses for his conduct, and desired me to deliver it. Mons. *d'Aimeri* received it with kindness. That very evening, we heard Mons. *de Murville* was very ill, and had sent for a Physician. He is much better to-day. When he is quite recovered, and in a situation to receive us, I intend to carry my young Prince thither, to see his house and gardens; and Mons. *d'Aimeri* has desired I will at the same time take the Chevalier *de Valmont*. So that I flatter myself there will be no longer any animosity between them either on one side or the other. Mons. *d'Aimeri*, knowing I have been sending you the particulars of this affair, bids me tell you he will write next post, and will send you his journal, as he promised you, once a month. I cannot conclude this letter without mentioning the Chevalier *de Valmont*. I never saw a young man of his age so polite, so well improved, and, at the same time, so artless and so amiable. He is continually talking to me of you and your agreeable family; and he assures me there is not a girl in the world equal to the lovely *Adelaide*. The young Prince has conceived a great friendship for him; and I shall take advantage of this attachment, which I greatly approve, in order to establish a correspondence between them, which will more assuredly contribute to the improvement of my pupil.

## LETTER LV.

*Viscountess to the Baroneess.*

I AM vexed and out of humour, my dear friend. For some days past, little quarrels and domestick concerns have seriously troubled me, and I am going to ease my mind by telling you of them. Mons. *de Valey* had hitherto conducted himself intirely to my satisfaction. He appeared very fond of his wife, but, at the same time, left her quite at liberty, and nobody ever appeared to be more free from jealousy, or a greater enemy to restraint, than he was. Last Monday my daughter was engaged to a ball; her mother-in-law came to call for her; *Flora* was in her bed; she pretended to have the head-ach; the party to the ball was put off. As soon as I heard of this sudden resolution, I went into her apartment, but, before I had entered it, I heard such loud and repeated bursts of laughter as fully satisfied me that I had nothing to fear on account of her illness. I found her alone, with the friend I mentioned to you, Madame *de Germeuil*. As soon as they saw me, they both assumed an air of gravity, and there was a profound silence, for a minute or two, occasioned by their confusion; I began to inquire after her health, and my daughter told me she was perfectly well, but very much disappointed at not going to the ball; that it was a whim of Mons. *de Valey's*, who had obliged her to put off her engagement. I asked her what was his reason? Ah, my God! said she smiling, do not you know his strange humour and his violent jealousy?.... I have

have tried to conceal it, said she, assuming, as long as I was able, a more serious countenance; but the proofs he gives of it are now so ridiculous and so frequent, that it is impossible to hide it any longer. During this discourse I stood motionless with surprise! What, said I, is Mons. *de Valey* jealous, and you make so light of it! Is it in this manner you speak of the greatest misfortune which can happen to a virtuous and sensible woman? Why should I vex myself, said *Flora*, for his madness? I forgive him, I pity him, I submit to his humour; but I do not see that I am to make myself miserable about it. This answer, which appeared to put an air of ridicule upon what I had said, quite confounded me; I then talked to her more seriously. But she made use of so much sweetness and so many graces, in order to soften my anger, that I could not resist her. She told me her husband was engaged to the ball before she was invited, and that afterwards he was much out of humour, and said he would not go; and, that all this day, he had treated her in a very cruel manner; which Madame *de Germeuil* confirmed, as she had been witness to it; and added many circumstances too tedious to mention. I made my remarks, and gave the advice I thought necessary, and then went to bed. The next morning I sent for Mons. *de Valey*, and talked to him of his jealousy. He fell a laughing. It is Madame *de Valey*'s folly, said he; she will insist on it that I am jealous, and every day reproaches me with it; she not only makes her friends believe so, but she appears convinced of it herself. However, I protest to you there is not a word of truth in it. I do every thing in my power to remove this notion; she is intirely at liberty to receive whatever company

pany she pleases. I never watch her steps, nor follow her, and I am never out of temper, but when she accuses me of errors I never was guilty of in my life. Yet, said I, she did not go to the ball last night, because she would not displease you; and this was a great sacrifice for her to make. Yes, answered he, and, if I was jealous, as she pretends, I should not have been the less so on that account, as she spent the night at the Masquerade, where I also was, and where by chance I saw and knew her. But, added Mons. *de Valey*, seeing astonishment painted on my face, I do not altogether disapprove of these things. She is very young, and she thought it more agreeable to go to a masqued ball with her friend, than to a dressed ball with her mother-in-law. This appears to me the plain case, and you should not be more severe than I am. Put yourself, my dear friend, one moment in my situation; and imagine, if possible, the grief this explanation gave me, which proved the sincerity and indulgence of Mons. *de Valey*, and discovered in his wife a series of falsehood, artifice, and intrigue. Grieved to the heart, and in a violent passion, I went to her, and we came to very high words; she wept very much, and protested to me, when she saw me, she had no thoughts of going to the masqued ball; that it came from Madame *de Germcuil*, who had pressed her so much, that at length she yielded to her intreaties. She still insists on it, that her husband is jealous, but that his pride will not suffer him to own it, for fear he should appear ridiculous.

I have laid down a plan for her conduct, which she has promised me she will follow exactly. She gave me such assurances of her affection and

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confidence, and confessed her faults with so much candour and concern, that, whether from being convinced of the truth of it, or whether from my own weakness, she has quite satisfied me. But I could not help observing with some concern, that she was scarce able to conceal her ill humour towards her husband. However, for these two days past, she seems in perfect good temper, and they are to all appearance very good friends. What vexes me is, that this story is got abroad, and is told much to the disadvantage of Mons. *de Vale*y, who they pretend is very unjust and tyrannical. They think my daughter is very unhappy ; they pity and lament her fate ; and I cannot help thinking these false notions are circulated about by herself and her friends. This, my dear friend, gives me the greatest concern. I still hope my daughter deceives herself, and that she has not yet learned her husband's disposition ; but this appears incredible with the sense of which she is possessed, and yet it seems as if she was not sincere, as if she was acting a part to make herself interesting, and as if she wanted to find a lawful pretence for no longer loving the husband she preferred to every other man .... This thought afflicts me ; it is dreadful, and fills my heart with grief. It is supposing her capable of more art and cunning than one could imagine possible in a young woman of nineteen. Adieu ! my dear friend. I stand much in want of your remarks, of your advice, and your friendship. Advise me, teach me how to act ; on your counsel I depend. Adieu ! Let me have an answer as soon as possible.

## LETTER LVI.

*The Baroneſſe to Madame d'Oſalis.*

I FLATTER myself, my dear child, you will receive this letter with pleasure, since it is written to acquaint you, that your mother will have the happiness to embrace you in a few days. I shall set out next Friday, and, though I know all your tenderness for me, yet I must tell you it is impossible for you to form a just idea of the pleasure I shall have in seeing you again. No, my dear child, there is no sentiment to be held in competition with the affection of a tender mother! If Nature has not made you my daughter, are you not the child of my adoption? And do you think I can ever love those more whom chance has given me? In short, I am going to receive the reward due to my fortitude and resolution, which have so long resisted your pressing intreaties, so often repeated, to let you come to Languedoc. It was of too much consequence to your husband's affairs, and the happiness of your own life, that you should remain at Paris, and that I should give up the ardent desire I had to see you to such prudential reasons. It is thus, my dear child, we ought to shew our affection. And now I may tell you, that for this twelvemonth past I have earnestly wished to return to Paris; and that it has cost me more pain to consent with a good grace to stay here these last six months, than the whole four years we agreed upon. But M. *d'Almane* thought with great reason, that we should not leave the country till the month of August, the season of the vintage being a great amusement

amusement to the children ; and, besides, it would give them more cause to regret the pleasant country life they had led, and the situation where they had received their improvements. Adieu ! my dear child. This is the first adieu that I have bid you without pain, since our separation. You will find me, no doubt, as the Viscountess says, very old, and very much tanned, with our fine Sun of Languedoc, for which she has taken such an aversion. As for you, my dear, I am sure that four years and an half will have only improved the charms of your elegant and agreeable person which I so much admire. Adieu ! once more. My heart palpitates, when I think that another fortnight will bring me to you.

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## LETTER LVII.

*The Baroneſſ to Madame de Valmont.*

Paris.

I ARRIVED here, Madam, yesterday noon, and, about twenty-five leagues from Paris, I met Madame *d'Oſtalis* and Madame *de Limours*. So that you will easily guess, notwithstanding my aversion to travelling, that the last part of my journey appeared very short. When I arrived at my own house, Madame *d'Oſtalis* conducted me to a little room she knew I was very fond of. I saw with astonishment she had new furnished it in a very different manner from its former state. I wish to convince you, said she, that I have not been idle in your absence. All this is my work. I have embroidered this furniture, have drawn these landscapes, and painted these flowers, fruits, birds, and minia-

miniatures. This pleasing attention in Madame *d'Ostalis* was still more valuable, as she had many other avocations, such as taking infinite pains with her children, and fulfilling the duties of her employment, which she does with the utmost exactness. But one has no idea of what may be done, when one is not inclined to idleness, and when one does not lose a moment from some useful or agreeable work. With regard to her person, she is beautiful as an Angel. Her mind is all purity and innocence. She keeps good hours, she never intrigues, she drinks no tea nor coffee with cream, and therefore she will for a long time preserve her charming state of health, her beauty, and her complexion.

*Adelaide* and *Theodore* already regret Languedoc. They have been to-day to walk in the *Palais royal*, and complain much of the croud and the dust. They find it a sad thing to have only a little garden, which they can go round in ten minutes. Miss *Bridget* agrees perfectly with them in their opinions, as the eating her meals alone in her chamber makes the residing at Paris extremely disagreeable to her.

Mons. *d'Almane* has just received a letter from Mons. *d'Aimeri*, who tells him he means to remain in \*\*\* till November, when he intends going to Russia, and will return to Paris next June. He will stay here three months, and then conduct Charles to his Garrison. Adieu, Madam! Let me hear from you. You may judge, by my eagerness to write to you, the value I shall set on your punctuality.

*Billet from the Viscountess to the Baroneess.*

AH my dear friend ! if you have a moment to spare, come to me . . . pray come . . . I am miserable . . . quite miserable . . . The adventure of the Garden is but too true . . . She will be lost . . . Come, for Heaven's sake ; I must absolutely speak to you. —

*Billet from Madame de Valey to Madame de Germueil.*

OUR midnight walk is no longer a secret . . . You may imagine the consequences ! What scolding, what sermons, I have been obliged to listen to ! . . . I cannot come out. But do you go immediately to Madame *de Gerville*, and acquaint her with our disaster. Tell her they put the worst construction on that which was in reality nothing but giddiness . . . She will manage the affair for us . . . Adieu, for I am afraid of being surprized.

## LETTER LVIII.

*The Baronejs to Madame d'Ostalis.*

**I**KNOW not, my dear child, if the adventure of Madame *de Valey* is talked of at Fontainbleau, but this is the true story : Last Monday, the 20th of October, Madame *de Valey* told her mother she should sup at the *Palais royal*, and about half past nine, she and the Countess *de Germueil* sat out, and did not return till half past Three in the morning. The next day she told her mother she had supped

suppered there, and that, at Twelve o'clock they heard, from the room they were in, some delightful music ; that Madame *de Germeuil* would not let her rest, till she consented to go down to the garden, where they staid about a quarter of an hour, and then they both returned home to Madame *de Germeuil*'s house, where they drank tea together, while Madame *de Germeuil* undressed herself ; and that in short they forgot the time till it was Three o'clock. The next evening the Chevalier *de Herbain* told Madame *de Limours*, that it was reported her daughter had been seen, with Madame *de Germeuil*, walking with M. *de Creny* and M. *de B*— from One o'clock till Three. Madame *de Limours* would not believe it, but the next day one of the servants, who attended Madame *de Valey*, being much pressed by Madame *de Limours*, confessed that his Lady returned from the *Palais royal* at Eleven o'clock ; that they went and undressed at Madame *de Germeuil*'s, and then returned to the *Palais royal*, where they staid three hours in the garden. This affair has been made public by Mons. *B*—, who has been in love with Madame *de Valey* these six months. He also supped at the *Palais royal*, and pretends to have heard Madame *de Valey* make the appointment with Mons. *de Creny*. Mons. *de B*— went into the garden with two of his friends, and there saw the two Gentlemen, after waiting half an hour, joined by Madame *de Valey* and Madame *de Germeuil*, and walk with them till the hour I mentioned.

Mons. *de B*—, to revenge himself for the coquetry of Madame *de Valey*, and for the false hopes she had given him, has been so uncivil as to divulge this adventure, and unfortunately with such circumstances as leave no room to doubt the truth of it.

it. Madame *de Valey* has suffered the reproaches of her mother, and sees her grief with so much coolness and indifference, that I have no hopes of her ever being cured of her imprudence. What appears to me most extraordinary is, that her father does not take notice of it properly, but treats it as a childish folly. He has even quarrelled with Madame *de Limours* on the subject. Unfortunate mother! . . . How much I pity her . . . She is now undeceived; she knows her daughter but too well. She sees no prospect of amendment; she is truly in despair . . . If you should hear of this affair, deny the truth of it, say you are certain Madame *de Valey* has not set her foot in the *Palais royal*; that she returned the same evening before Twelve o'clock. There is no other means of defending a bad cause; for, if you admit the truth of one circumstance, you must own the whole. Adieu, my dear child! return to me as soon as you can.

I open my letter to tell you, that Mons. *Creny* and Mons. *B*— have fought this morning; the last is very well, and the first has only a small scratch on the hand. If the duel did not end tragically, at least they give the finest description of it; and the Seconds declare they never saw such generosity, presence of mind, delicacy, &c. in short, every thing but wounds and bloodshed; and the two rivals, charmed with each other's bravery, embraced, and are now perfectly reconciled. But what gives me stronger proofs of the truth of this adventure is, that Madame *de Valey* is more afflicted than ever.

*Billet from Madame de Valey to Mons.  
de Creny.*

THINK no more of coming to me ; that is impossible ; but, since Madame *de Gerville* has sent to know how you do, you may avail yourself of that, and visit her. Make friends of her, and of my mother-in-law, let it cost you what it will : it is the only means by which we can see each other as usual. Praise and flatter Madame *de Gerville* upon her beauty, her youthful appearance, and talk to her about being at Court. Play at *Quinze* with my mother-in-law, and all will do well. I say nothing of my attachment to you, you know it but too well. Let me at least have yours in return, to make me amends for the sacrifices I have made you, in order to convince you of my affection.

LETTER LIX.

*Madame de Valey to Madame de Germeuil.*

REALLY, my dear friend, you have not common sense ; you are in despair ; you can never console yourself for a conduct which nothing can excuse the illusion is vanished, &c. &c.—These are fine expressions ! . . . What words, what a romantic style ! and all this to say you have a lover, and that you do not feel for him that extreme tenderness which only exists in imagination. You prefer him ; you love him better than any other. But this is not the kind of love we admired so much in

in *Cleveland*, or *Laide*; but such as it really is. Ah! do you reckon as nothing the charms of being beloved, obeyed, and the pleasure of commanding? You shall always you say be unhappy, because you have an extreme delicacy and a steady mind. What can there be worse? We are never satisfied, and we cannot deceive ourselves. As for me, I have the happy talent of pleasing myself, at least for some time; and, when one fancy is at an end, I repair the loss by forming another. And therefore you see me, by turns, indifferent in love, a coquette; and always what I appear to be; because, when I undertake a part, I go through with it. My inclinations yield to it, and it appears as if it were my real sentiments. This is all the artifice I make use of. I leave you to judge whether it is excusable, since, instead of deceiving others, I begin by deceiving myself.

I agree with you, if one could dive into futurity, one never would encourage a lover. If one was but sensible, that the pains and the emotions we experience before the fatal confession were the principal pleasures of love, and that the moment we deviate from the path of rectitude, we find the sweet enchantment to be broken for ever, we should never wish to be under such delusions. For my part, I was a thousand times happier six months ago than I am at this time. Prejudice and repentance out of the question, one moment's conversation, a word said to me unperceived, even a look, an accidental meeting in the street or at the Opera, was enchanting! The habit and certainty of being beloved have made me infinitely less sensible to these little incidents. I have nothing to look forward to; every thing is settled; my heart

is at rest, and I honestly confess to you vanity engages me much more than love ! --- Vanity ! . . . Yes ! it is that alone which determines the destiny of a woman. If it had not been for the fear of a rival on the most trifling matter imaginable, I should never have had a lover, or at least I should have made another choice ; an Assembly determined my fate. Madame *de \*\*\** danced better than me, but my beauty was more admired than her's ; this celebrated evening made us enemies : you know the triumph I have since gained over her. She laments the lover I have robbed her, of and I regret the tranquillity I have lost. See what an effect a dance had over *three* persons ! But, if vanity leads us astray, at least it affords us consolation. We do not chuse to look forward to futurity ; the prospect is too frightful ! To be admired, to be in the fashion, to be successful in our pursuits, and to amuse ourselves, will keep us from remorse and melancholy ideas. You ask my advice, my dear friend, and I recommend it to you to renounce the folly of keeping a secret which already is known in the Polite World ; to own it publicly would be indecent ; but to acknowledge it to some particular friends, on whom you could depend, would be one of the best means to attach them to you, and to interest them in your fortune. You appear to me to regret most dreadfully what you call your former character ; they could never, you say, accuse you of having a lover : this is true ; and, supposing you to be thirty years old, I should think your concern well grounded. But in short it was not, that your character was perfectly established ; only, that you had not yet got a lover. However, they may still quote you as an example of having but one ; and though this

glory is not so great as the other, yet it is almost as singular, and indeed I am not much surprised at it; for a first lover is almost a husband; and such are frequently engaged so young, that it is less owing to the choice of one's heart, than to vanity and giddiness: and how is that likely to last? . . . Adieu! return from the country; I must see you and talk with you. Your letter, your complaints, your difficulties, all give me pain, in spite of myself, and put me out of humour. Happily for me, I am to sup this evening with a Lady who loves her husband, who has never had a lover, who is yet beautiful, though she is more than thirty years old. You know whom I mean: in truth in the humour I am in, her presence will disgust me more than ever. Apropos of women of unblemished character, I have much to say in praise of Madame *d'Ostalis*. She has defended me with great warmth in the world, as you have heard. Since that, she has taken great pains to reconcile me and my mother, and even now she is doing very kind things for me; the particulars of which I will tell you when I see you. Indeed I reproach myself greatly for the dislike I had taken to her. Adieu! return quickly, you are more necessary to me than ever. I shall expect you on Monday to supper.

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## LETTER LX.

*The Baroness to Madame de Valmont.*

YOU desired to know, Madam, what effect an evening ball would have upon *Adelaide*, and I can now satisfy your curiosity. I carried her and

her bother to a ball last night, for the first time. You know they have had a dancing-master for these six months past ; and that they are as able to acquit themselves properly as any other young persons of their own age, and the more easily, as they have been accustomed early to run and jump with the greatest dexterity : *Adelaide*, prepossessed by the little Comedy of the *Dove*, had no great desire to go to a ball ; and her cap, and high dressed head, and gown ornamented with flowers, &c. &c. appeared to her as an attire ill calculated for dancing. When she was dressed, I led her into the Saloon, where we found Madame *d'Ostalis*, and some other friends, who had dined with us. Every body praised her dress, but did not say a word of her person ; and Madame *d'Ostalis* said, *Adelaide* is very well dressed ; but do you not think she looks a thousand times better in the white frock she wears every day, than in this fine coat ? Every one was of her opinion, and agreed that an elegant neatness was always the most pleasing ! This conversation made *Adelaide* still more displeased with her dress. She complained that the wires, which fastened on the festoons of flowers, scratched her arms ; and that the weight of her head-dress gave her an intolerable pain in her head. In the midst of these complaints, the clock struck five, and we set out : as we were crossing the anti-chamber, *Brunel* stopped us a moment, because he wanted to see *Adelaide* in her new dress ; but he had scarcely cast his eyes on her, than he burst into a loud laugh. *Adelaide*, a little disconcerted, asked him the reason of this incivility ? Excuse me, Madam, said he ; but the rouge and the dress altogether make Mademoiselle look so droll ... At these words he laughed again ; and we continued

tinued our way, vexed enough at the impertinent gaiety of *Brunel*, and got into the coach in a very indifferent humour to go to a ball. We were scarce arrived at the place, and *Adelaide* seated in her place, but she begged me to take a fly off, which had settled on her cheek: you must bear with it, said I, or you will rub off the rouge, and make your face all in streaks. *Adelaide* complained much of the rouge, and, not being able to bear the tickling of the fly, she put her hand cross her cheek two or three times, and by that means painted her nose and eyes. I made her observe herself in a looking-glass, and she was not very well satisfied with her appearance. However, she behaved very well. I do not think, said she, that any dancer will like such a figure for his partner. Well, said I, if you do not dance, you may talk. For instance, what do you think of that little girl who dances with *Theodore*? Oh, I have been looking at her this long time. — Well, what do you think of her? I think, Mamma, she appears as if she was mad. Pray look at her, when they stand still, how she is agitated; with what a familiar air she talks to all the young men! What faces she makes! Her head turns round like a weather-cock... Ah, now she dances... My God! How she jumps and turns about! This is very droll, but it is very ugly, is it not, Mamma? — Yes, she pretends to be extremely light and nimble, but she appears quite ignorant, that above all she ought to be genteel and modest: besides, one may surely dance very lightly, and much more gracefully, without twisting one's self about, or jumping so ridiculously... But, Mamma, I see this manner of dancing is quite the fashion: do you see those two young Ladies, one in the rose-coloured silk, the

other in white . . . They do the same thing . . . Yes, I see it is the reigning fashion, and it is natural it should be so ; all that is best to be done is generally uncommon. The number of sensible people, and those who have a good taste, are very few, and this makes persons of this class so much admired ; for, if wit, virtue, and knowledge, were united with the graces more frequently than they are, one should find infinitely more pleasure in such society. But, mixed together in the crowd, one has but little opportunity of acquiring esteem or of meeting with admiration.—Yes, I understand you, Mamma ; good things are always scarce ; and this is the reason why there are so many coquettes, lazy, idle, ignorant people, and little girls who are so giddy-brained, and who make such a whirling and capering about in order to appear nimble. One must be a very absurd, however, to place one's self in such a crowd as this, instead of chusing the pleasing few which are so agreeable ! . . . Where one shall be distinguished, admired ! . . . *Adelaide* was in the midst of this conversation, when a young man came to ask her to dance. She quitted a discourse which amused her ; she was sensible that her dress did not make her appear to advantage ; besides, not being used to such a habit, she was much distressed, and did not dance well ; so that she saw people criticized her, and that nobody took notice of her beauty ; and she soon returned to her seat, fully resolved not to dance any more. From time to time, there passed before us large baskets full of refreshments, and tartlets, which tempted *Adelaide* very much. Accustomed only to eat fruit or bread at her supper, she did not attempt to take any thing. But I perceived the baskets drew sighs from her, and that

that she looked very earnestly at them. *Adelaide*, said I, you are not now such a child ; you are now eleven years old, you may eat if you are hungry, and of what you like best, provided it is not too much. I leave it to your own judgment, and I shall not even look at you. *Adelaide* took advantage of this permission with great joy. And, every time I saw the baskets pass by, I turned my head another way and talked to my friends. *Adelaide*, thinking I did not observe her in the least, eat all the tartlets they brought her. I was going to leave the ball, when *Theodore* came up to me in great concern, to tell me "he had had the misfortune " to break a looking-glass, as he was playing " by himself in an adjoining room ; and intreated " me to go and tell the mistress of the house, that " no one should be accused wrongfully."

You will guess the pleasure this delicacy and candour gave me. I embraced *Theodore*, and acquainted the mistress of the accident. I then took him and his sister, and we came away. *Adelaide* was silent and melancholy. I asked her the reason of it. She told me she had a pain in her head. It is because you have surfeited yourself. — Mé, Mamma ? Yes ; you have eat ten tartlets, six biscuits, and taken two glasses of ice cream, therefore it is not at all surprising that you should be sick. — I did not think I had eat so much — nor that you had been so narrowly observing ! This will teach you two things : First, that temperance is a virtue as useful as it is estimable ; and secondly, that nothing can prevent my attention to you, and that, when I seem not to regard you, I see every thing you do. Besides, *Adelaide*, when one is generous, you should never abuse the confidence reposed in you . . .

you... Oh! Mamma, I see my fault, and will take care to mend.— I hope so; but, my dear child, was it necessary you should learn by so sad an experience what you might have been perfectly convinced of, had you paid a proper regard to what I told you?... Oh, Mamma, I believe every thing you say to me... Why then did you not prove it on this occasion? For instance, putting the tartlets out of the question, your dress at the ball; I should have advised you to one much plainer. My little Comedy of the *Dove* I thought had given you an aversion for a dress so ornamented. And yet, when you saw at Mademoiselle *Hubert*'s a robe trimmed with flowers, you desired to have such a one. You see the success it procured you, and also the enormous quantity of rouge which you put on.... Oh, it is enough! I will never again have a robe trimmed with flowers, nor ever will put on any more rouge... Do not go to extremes in any thing. It is right to follow the fashion, but always with moderation. I wish you to have a proper taste, to prefer in general a modest simplicity, with elegance and convenience, to a shining dress overloaded with ornaments. As I finished these words, the coach stopped. Poor *Adelaide*, scarce able to support herself, got out with great difficulty, and, as soon as she got to her chamber, she was ill, and vomited very much; and had not even the consolation of finding any of those who surrounded her pitied her; on the contrary, she heard every body saying they were surprised at her intemperance, and testified a great dislike for the kind of illness she suffered. And, in short, the word *surfeited* was pronounced with great contempt by every body but me, who was silent, and who carefully watched over

*Adelaide*

*Adelaide* with pity and concern. She was very grateful to me for this kindness, and shewed a true repentance for her fault, declaring she would never have a surfeit again of her own causing.

All these things have made me sensible of the advantages of our method of education. It is certain that the best child in the world would not have been able to support herself under a trial so new. For example, you have seen *Adelaide* in a room filled with sweetmeats and sugar-plums, and, thinking herself alone, she has not attempted to touch them, because she has given her promise not to eat any. You also know it was necessary to punish her and put her to trials, in order to bring her to this degree of probity at which she is arrived. But, as hitherto she was only temperate through obedience and a principle of honour, so, as soon as she was left to herself, she forgot all the praises she had heard of this quality, and she eat to excess. If one should forget conversations on these subjects, one always remembers facts, especially when they are accompanied by such disagreeable circumstances. It is therefore indispensably necessary to instruct children on all these points, not only by lessons, but by experience. I do not mean to exclude reasoning, but I repeat that they will learn more by experiments. To return to *Adelaide*, she had still a pain in her head this morning, and found herself much fatigued. Madame *d'Ostalis* has preached a good deal to her, at last she added : You see I have a fresh colour and have very good teeth. Madame *de Germeuil* does not appear handsome to you, because she has not these advantages ; and yet she is younger than I am by two years.— But she never had your complexion or your teeth !... Pardon me ; when

she

she was married, she had a beautiful complexion; but she was a glutton, she eat numbers of tartlets, and often had indigestions, and now you see what a pimpled face she has. *Adelaide* appeared much struck with this discourse, and after two days living on plain diet, she will be able to make still better reflections than she has yet done on the subject. Adieu, Madam! You see how punctually I obey you; it is necessary I should depend on your friendship, as well as your partiality to *Adelaide*, when I venture to talk to you so much about her.

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## LETTER LXI.

*The Brroneess to Madame d'Ostalis.*

**I**CAN easily conceive, my dear child, that you are vexed at being obliged to stay two days longer at Versailles, only on disagreeable affairs. But your husband is absent, and you must take care of his interest. Besides, do you remember the excellent advice of Madame *de Lambert*?

“ Whilst you are young, form your character,  
 “ establish your reputation, settle your affairs:  
 “ when you are older, you will find more difficulty  
 “ in doing it. In youth, every thing assists you,  
 “ every thing offers itself to you. Young people  
 “ rule without knowing it. At a more advanced  
 “ age, you meet with no help. You are no longer  
 “ possessed of that seducing charm which diffuses  
 “ itself over every thing. You have nothing left  
 “ you but reflection and truth which do not often  
 “ govern mankind.”

I spent

I spent a delightful evening last night with Madame *de Limours*. The Ambassador from — whom I do not know, is arrived there, and, almost as soon as he came in, asked if you was returned from Versailles. You became the subject of general conversation: every one praised your conduct, your talents, your person, your mildness, and that natural and lively chearfulness, which so well becomes you, and makes you so amiable. Oh! how pleasing to the heart, and how flattering to one's vanity, is it to hear it said it is to you she owes these principles, those virtues, and this character. One is not obliged to conceal this kind of pride; on the contrary, one may avow it, and even boast of it openly, and prove that one is susceptible to it. Of all the compliments paid you, none have flattered me so much as those of the Ambassador... because he did not know me, and was insensible of the interest I took in the conversation.

Yes, my dear child! I with great pleasure see the time arriving, when we shall return to Languedoc. What can I regret at Paris, since this time I take you with me? I think, that we shall not go directly to B—, our intention is to pass a month in Bretagne. I will tell you the reason; it is a long History, and will surely interest you. Adieu! my dear child. I expect you on Saturday.

## LETTER LXII.

*Madame de Valey to Mons. de Creny.*

YOU desire me to explain myself. *You see plainly I am discontented. In vain you seek to find out the reason.* Since you are neither delicate nor penetrating enough to divine it, I am going to tell it you. You love me, I have no doubt of it: but it is in a manner I do not approve. Incapable of feigning, detesting art and constraint, I have neither been able to disguise nor conceal the sentiments I had for you. Nobody is ignorant of it. You ought at least to justify by your conduct the preference you have obtained from me, but you take a directly contrary method. When we are alone, you speak to me of your passion, of the excess of your love, which forms a conversation with little variety, and which at the end of a twelve-month might weary the most constant woman. Sure of possessing your heart, all these protestations are useless; the repetition tires one; the very idea makes one melancholy. When you talk of your happiness, it is with so serious a tone, that really by your appearance and manner of speaking one would think you was in despair. For Heaven's sake, let me have a little variety, for I cannot bear this any longer. But, on the other hand, when we are in company together, you pursue other methods which are still more insupportable to me. You scarcely seem to look at me; then every thing employs you, every thing pleases you, except me.

In

In your general conversations, love, according to your opinion, is only imagination and folly. You speak of it with a degree of raillery, which would make one suppose, you did not believe there was such a sentiment ; and you call this ridiculous affection, prudence, and discretion : for my part, I cannot bear it. It is known that I love you ; and people would be persuaded from your discourse, that I have only yielded to an imaginary passion ; so you deprive me of the only excuse I could make, that of a mutual and ardent attachment. I declare to you, I cannot support this opinion. My heart, and my pride, are both equally wounded. I would have every body see, that you love me and prefer me to all others : at the same time I forbid you ever shewing the smallest degree of freedom with me, or any of those little attentions, which belong only to gallantry, and which I disdain being the object of. To be attentive, with reserve and respect is to be your part in public. When we are alone, you may be trifling, inconsiderate, and if you please, a little more cheerful ; it will not alarm me, and I shall like it much better. Adieu. I have told you my sentiments, and disposition : after this, you see, you must follow my advice exactly, if you mean to preserve me yours.

## LETTER LXIII.

*Madame d'Almane, to Madame de Valmont.*

**I**T is true, Madam, that we are determined to go into Bretagne before we return to Languedoc : and what has determined us, is the desire of seeing

two persons as extraordinary as they are interesting; they are Mons. and Madame *Lagaraye*. This is their history: Mons. le Marquis *de Lagaraye*, was thought to be the happiest man in Bretagne; beloved by an amiable wife; considered in the province where he lived as a man of the greatest personal merit. His birth, and his fortune, collected together all the respectable families in the neighbourhood. There they acted Plays, gave balls, and every day brought with it a new entertainment. Madame *de Lagaraye* partook of the same amusements with her husband. When in the midst of gaiety, at one of their entertainments, the sudden and extraordinary death of their only daughter produced in their minds as sudden a change, as it was unexpected. A dislike to company, a detachment from the trifling amusements they had been used to, made them turn their thoughts to the sublime principles of religion; and at the same time gave rise to a design, which was never before thought of. Mons. *Lagaraye* communicated his intentions to his wife, and nothing prevented their putting them into execution. They went to Montpellier, and staid there two years, employing themselves in every thing relating to physic and surgery. They went through several courses of Chymistry, Anatomy, &c. learning to bleed and dress wounds, and uniting to this study all the application necessary to effect their purpose, which their charitable motives and enthusiasm led them to; and they both made an astonishing progress in the profession. During this time, they had given orders for their Castle at *Lagaraye* to be transformed into an Hospital, containing two wings, one for men and the other for women. And this beautiful situation, which once was the habitation of joy, pleasures, and

mag-

magnificence, is now become a Temple sacred to Religion and Humanity. As soon as Mons. and Madame *de Lagaraye* left Montpelier, and arrived at their own Castle, Mons. *de Lagaraye* being then forty-five years of age, put himself at the head of the hospital for men, and devoted his life and fortune to the service of those poor, to whom this house is dedicated. Madame *de Lagaraye*, ten years younger than her husband, imposes on herself the same duties in the part of the house belonging to women. Still young and beautiful, she leaves with delight the gay apparel of vanity, and takes the humble and modest vesture of a nun, whose business it is to take care of the sick. This establishment, this example of every virtue, beyond what has ever been seen worthy of admiration, is still subsisting, and has subsisted for these ten years. This, Madame, is what we are going to see. *Adelaide* and *Theodore* will take their first Communion in six months ; and I cannot better prepare them for it, than in letting them take a journey to *Lagaraye*. It is so charming to behold Virtue in its true light ! the respect paid to it is the first step towards acquiring it. Madame *d'Ostalis* goes with us to Bretagne, and returns with us to Languedoc, for three months, therefore I shall only leave Madame *de Limours* behind me to regret.

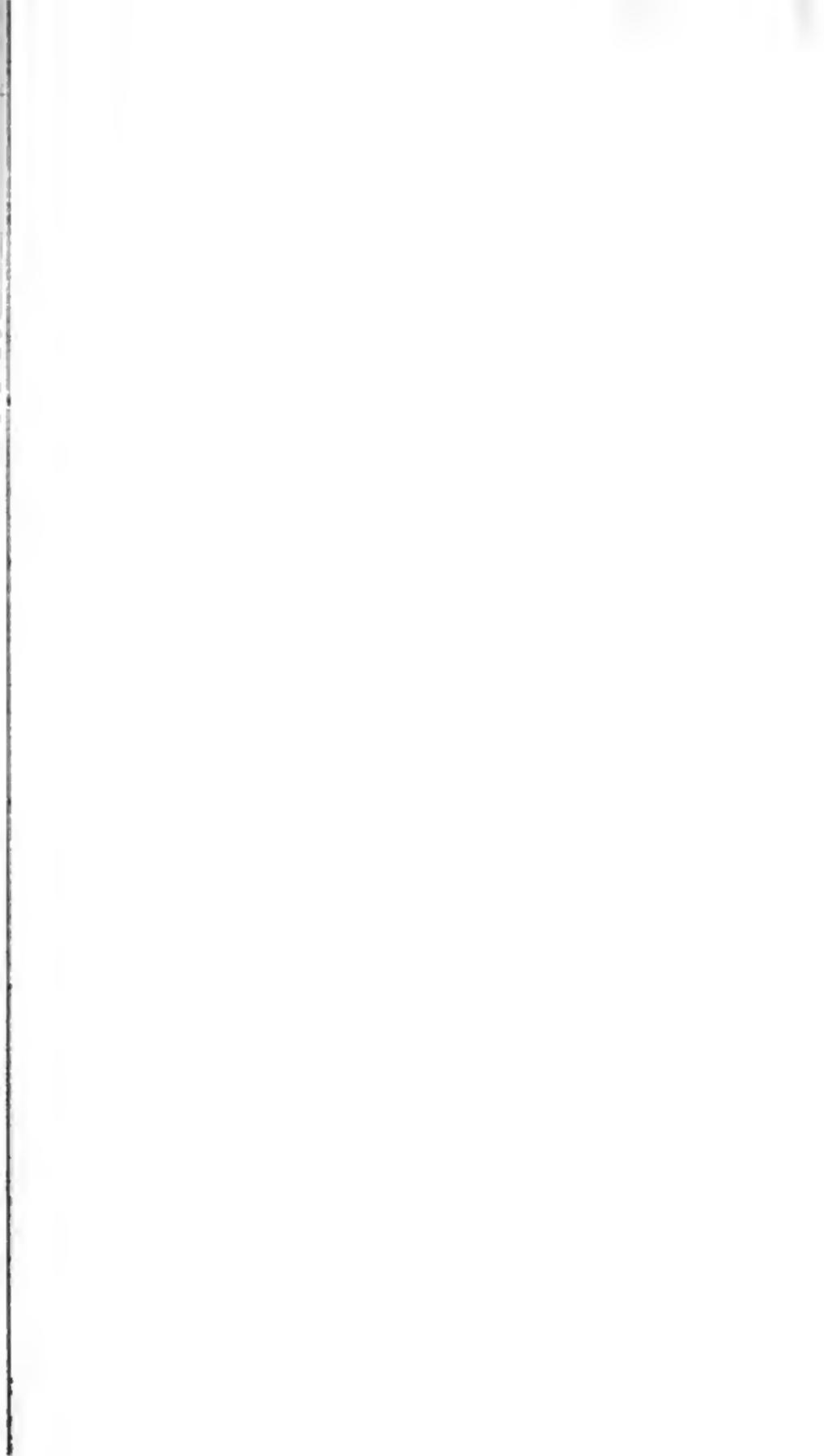
You ask me for some account of the amiable child, who is one day to be my daughter in law, if her heart does not make any objection to it. She is indeed charming both in person and mind. *Theodore* finds her very gentle and very beautiful, and *Adelaide* loves her passionately ; *Constantia* has not the genius of *Adelaide*, but she is sensible, prudent, mild, and obliging. Madame *de Limours* has brought her up very well, and has given her excellent principles.

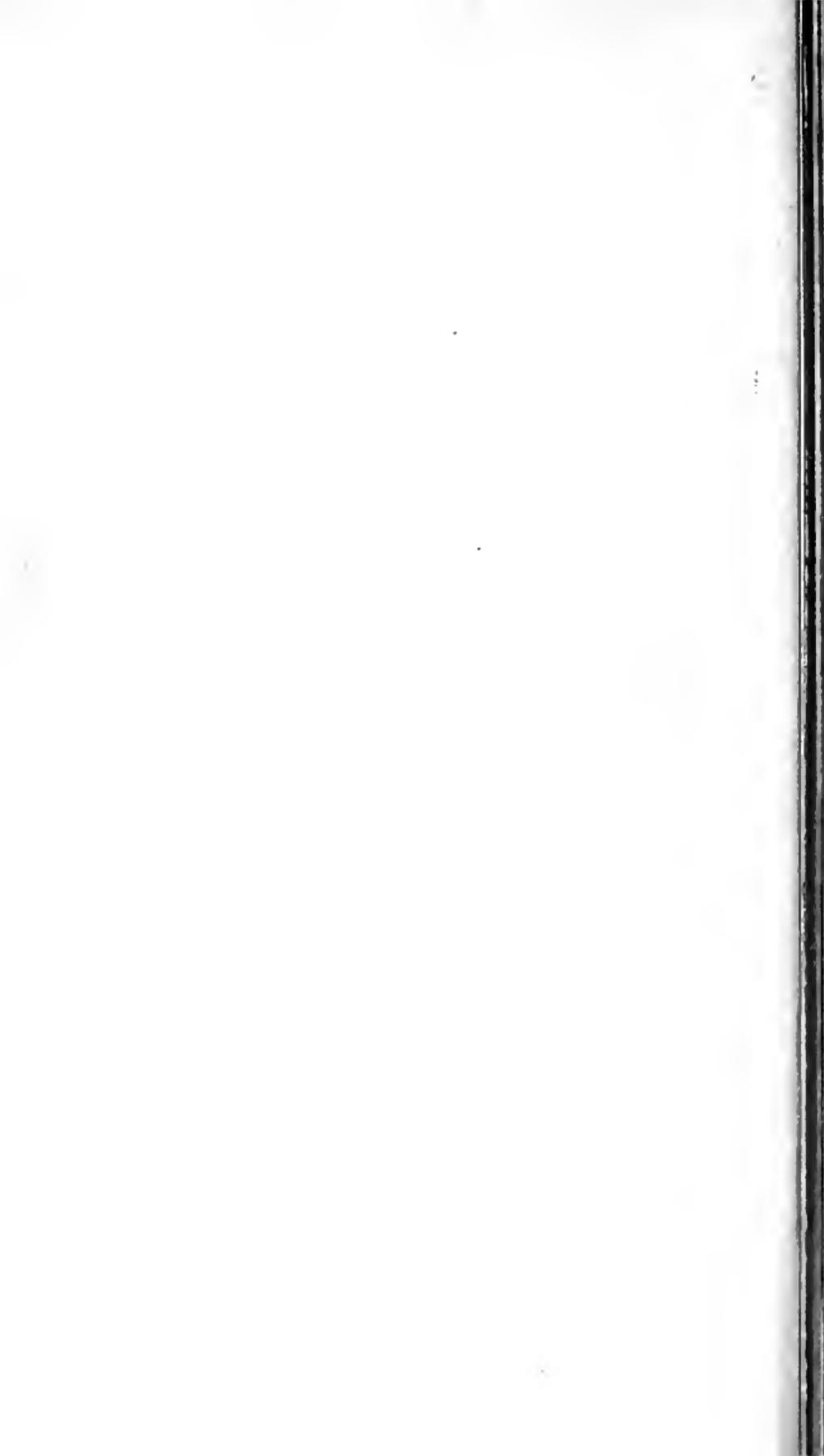
This child, notwithstanding, has an extreme sensibility, and a disposition to melancholy, which by its effects, if not guarded against, may make her very unhappy. Adieu, Madam. We go to-morrow to Languedoc, where we shall stay three weeks ; we shall then return for some days to Paris ; therefore in about six weeks I hope for the happiness of seeing you again ; and I flatter myself you have no doubt of the impatience, with which I wait for the moment, which is again to unite us.

*End of the First Volume.*









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Genlis, Stéphanie Félicité  
Ducrest de Saint-Aubin  
Adelaide and Theodore

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